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THE

SEVEN TEMPTATIONS.

BY MARY HOWITT.

What's done we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted.—*Burns.*

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1834.

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TO

ALARIC A. WATTS, ESQ.

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED,

BY

HIS SINCERE FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE idea of this poem originated in a strong impression of the immense value of the human soul, and of all the varied modes of its trials, according to its own infinitely varied modifications, as existing in different individuals. We see the awful mass of sorrow and of crime in the world, but we know only in part—in a very small degree, the fearful weight of solicitations and impulses of passion, and the vast constraint of circumstances, that are brought into play against suffering humanity. In the luminous words of my motto,

> 'What's done we partly may compute,
> But know not what's resisted.'

Thus, without sufficient reflection, we are furnished with data on which to condemn our fellow-creatures,

but without sufficient grounds for their palliation and commiseration. It is necessary for the acquisition of that charity, which is the soul of christianity, for us to descend into the depths of our own nature; to put ourselves into many imaginary and untried situations, that we may enable ourselves to form some tolerable notion how we might be affected by them; how far we might be tempted—how far deceived—how far we might have occasion to lament the evil power of circumstances, to weep over our own weakness, and pray for the pardon of our crimes; that, having raised up this vivid perception of what we might do, suffer and become, we may apply the rule to our fellows, and cease to be astonished in some degree, at the shapes of atrocity into which some of them are transformed; and learn to bear with others as brethren, who have been tried tenfold beyond our own experience, or perhaps our strength.

The evil agent whom I have employed for the working out of this moral process, in this poem, may either be regarded literally, as he is represented, according to the popular creed; or simply, as a personification of the principle of temptation, as each individual reader's own bias of sentiment may lead him to prefer: for my own part, I regard him in the latter point of view.

There may be some who may not approve of the

extent of crime which I have brought into action in the course of these dramas. They may deem the experiment especially dubious in a female writer. But let such reflect, that without high temptation there could be no high crime; without high crime there could be no actual and adequate representation of human nature, as we know it to exist. And therefore to have flinched in this respect, would have been to defeat the whole object of my work. Let those reflect also, that it has not been my plan to render the description of crime alluring. In that case I should have deserved, not only all the blame the timid or the rigidly righteous could heap upon me, but also that of the philosophical observer of our nature; for my view of it then would have been false and unjust. But I have painted the career of crime such as it is—one uniform downward tendency to degradation and ruinous misery; and have thereby held up to young and old, to strong and weak, to the high and the lowly of earth, the most important moral lesson that the light and darkness of this strange life can teach to tried, allured, rational yet corruptible, intellectual yet sense-involved beings—the most important we are capable of giving or receiving.

The scenes, characters, and events in these dramas are, as in human life, exceedingly various, and exceedingly diversified in their degrees of moral purity or turpitude; but if they are allowed only to be such as fall really within the scope of our nature, they need no defence, for they must be full of lessons of wisdom and of stimulus to good.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
The Poor Scholar	1
Thomas of Torres	27
The Pirate	65
The Old Man	117
Raymond	153
Philip of Maine	225
The Sorrow of Teresa	339

The Seven Temptations.

In a gloomy chaotic region of universal space inhabited by the Spirits of Evil, who, enraged at their expulsion from heaven, still endeavoured to revenge themselves upon the justice of God, by overturning or defacing the beauty of his moral creation in the spirit of man, sate three of the lower order of Spirits. Among them was, Achzib the liar, or the runner to and fro,—a restless, ambitious spirit, who, hating good, coveted distinction among the bad.

For a long time they had sate in silence, each occupied by his own cogitations; and there is no telling how much longer they might have remained so, had not the attention of the youngest been diverted by a gloomily magnificent procession, which was dimly seen passing in the distance.

"Another of the favoured ones," said he, "is this day crowned!"

"Ay," replied Achzib, "it is an easy thing for some to obtain distinction! I have desired it for long;

I have done services to merit it; but my merits, like my desires, are fruitless."

"Hast thou," inquired the eldest of the three, "proved the supremacy of evil? hast thou shewn that we are stronger than God?"

"I have done much," said Achzib, "as ye all know!"

"But, if thou have failed to do this," rejoined the other, "thou canst not have deserved the distinction thou desirest!"

"But that is soon done!" answered Achzib.

"Not so soon!" interrupted the youngest spirit. "I have tried to prove it till I am weary; and now I unreluctantly make the confession, that though we are mighty, God is mightier than we—his mercy is stronger than our hate, his integrity than our craft!"

"I deny all this," said Achzib, "and I will prove it beyond controversy! I will directly ascend to the earth; and of the human spirits whom I will tempt, I will win the greater number, if not all of them, to their ruin!"

"If thou do this," said the eldest spirit, "thou wilt indeed deserve to be crowned like him whose honours thou murmurest against: it is for less than this that he obtained them!"

"You shall see," said Achzib exultingly, "what I will do. I will select seven human beings, and tempt them according to their several natures; and if I prove not beyond dispute the superior power of evil, let me be called tenfold, Achzib the liar!"

"Be it so!" replied the other two.

Achzib was upon earth. He took up his abode in a famous city, and assuming the character of a philosopher, inquired out their most learned men. All told him of a poor scholar. Achzib saw him and conversed with him. He found him young, worn out with study, and as simple, unpractised and inexperienced in the ways of men as a child. This shall be my first essay, said Achzib; and accordingly, accumulating learned treatises and immeasurably long parchments of puzzling but unsound philosophy, he made his attempt. Whether Achzib or the Poor Scholar triumphed, shall be seen.

THE POOR SCHOLAR.

PERSONS.

THE POOR SCHOLAR.
ACHZIB, THE PHILOSOPHER.
THE MOTHER.
LITTLE BOY.

The Scholar's Room.—Evening.

THE POOR SCHOLAR AND LITTLE BOY.

Little Boy, reading. "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Here endeth the 16th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John.

Poor Scholar. Most precious words! Now go your way;
The summer fields are green and bright;
Your tasks are done.—Why do you stay?
Christ give his peace to you! Good night!

Boy. You look so pale, sir! you are worse;
Let me remain, and be your nurse!
Sir, when my mother has been ill,
I 've kept her chamber neat and still,
And waited on her all the day!

Schol. Thank you! but yet you must not stay.
Still, still my boy, before we part
Receive my blessing—'t is my last!
I feel Death's hand is on my heart,
And my life's sun is sinking fast;
Yet mark me, child, I have no fear,—
'T is thus the Christian meets his end:
I know my work is finished here,
And God—thy God too—is my friend!
Thy joyful course has just began;
Life is in thee a fountain strong;
Yet look upon a dying man,
Receive his words and keep them long!
Fear God, all-wise, omnipotent,
In him we live and have our being;
He hath all love, all blessing sent—
Creator—Father—All-decreeing!
Fear him, and love, and praise, and trust:
Yet have of man no slavish fear;
Remember kings, like thee, are dust,
And at one judgment must appear.

But virtue, and its holy fruits,
The poet's soul, the sage's sense,
These are exalted attributes;
And these demand thy reverence.
But, boy, remember this, e'en then
Revere the gifts, but not the men!
Obey thy parents; they are given
To guide our inexperienced youth;
Types are they of the One in heaven,
Chastising but in love and truth!
Keep thyself pure—sin doth deface
The beauty of our spiritual life;
Do good to all men—live in peace
And charity, abhorring strife!
The mental power which God has given,
As I have taught thee, cultivate;
Thou canst not be too wise for heaven,
If thou dost humbly consecrate
Thy soul to God! and ever take
In his good book delight; there lies
The highest knowledge, which will make
Thy soul unto salvation wise!
My little boy, thou canst not know
How strives my spirit fervently,
How my heart's fountains overflow
With yearning tenderness for thee!

God keep and strengthen thee from sin!
God crown thy life with peace and joy,
And give at last to enter in
The city of his rest!
My boy
Farewell—I have had joy in thee;
I go to higher joy—oh, follow me!
But now farewell!

Boy. Kind sir, good night!
I will return with morning light. [*he goes out.*

[*The Poor Scholar sits for some time as in meditation, then rising and putting away all his books, except the Bible, he sits down again.*

Schol. Now, now I need them not, I 've done with them.
I need not blind philosophy, nor dreams
Of speculative men, entangling truth
In cobweb sophistry, away with them—
One word read by that child is worth them all!
— The business of my life is finished now
With this day's work. I have dismissed the class
For the last time—I am alone with death!
Tomorrow morn, they will inquire for me,
And learn that I have solved the last, great problem.
This pale, attenuate frame they may behold,

But that which loves, and hopes, and speculates,
They will perceive no more. Mysterious being!
Life cannot comprehend thee, though thou shewest
Thyself by all the functions of our life—
'T is death—death only, which is the great teacher!
Awful instructor! he doth enter in
The golden rooms of state, and all perforce
Teach there its proud, reluctant occupant;
He doth inform in miserable dens
The locked-up soul of sordid ignorance
With his sublimest knowledge! he hath stolen
Gently, not unawares, into the chamber
Of the Poor Scholar, like a sober friend
Who doth give time for ample preparation!
He hath dealt kindly with me, giving first
Yearnings for unimaginable good,
Which the world's pleasure could not satisfy;
And lofty aspiration, that lured on
The ardent soul as the sun lures the eagle;
Next came a drooping of the outward frame,
Paleness and feebleness, and wasted limbs,
Which said, "prepare! thy days are numbered!"
And thus for months has this poor frame declined,
Wasting and wasting; yet the spirit intense
Growing more clear, more hourly confident,
As if its disenthralment had begun!

Oh, I should long to die!
To be among the stars, the glorious stars;
To have no bounds to knowledge; to drink deep
Of living fountains—to behold the wise,
The good, the glorified! to be with God,
And Christ, who passed through death that I might live!
Oh I should long for death, but for one tie,
One lingering tie that binds me to the earth!
My mother! dearest, kindest, best of mothers!
What do I owe her not? all that is great,
All that is pure—all that I have enjoyed
Of outward pleasure, or of spiritual life,
I have derived from her! has she not laboured
Early and late for me? first through the years
Of sickly infancy—then by her toil
Maintained the ambitious scholar—overpaid
By what men said of him! Oh thou untired,
True heart of love, for thee I hoped to live;
To pay thee back thy never-spent affection;
To fill my father's place, and make thine age
As joyful as thou mad'st my passing youth!
Alas! it may not be! thou hast to weep—
Thou hast to know that sickness of the heart
Which bows it to the dust, when some unlooked-for,
Some irremediable woe befals!

———Surely ere long thou wilt be at my side,
For I did summon thee, and thy strong love
Brooks not delay! Alas, thou knowest not
It was to die within thy holy arms
That I have asked thy presence! Oh! come, come,
Thou most beloved being, bless thy son,
And take one comfort in his peaceful death!

[*A slight knocking is heard at the door, and the Philosopher enters.*

Philos. Well, my young friend, I 've looked in to inquire
After your health. I saw your class depart,
And would have conference with you once again.

Schol. To-night I must decline your friendship, sir.
I am so weak I cannot talk with you
On controversial points ever again.
Besides, my faith brings such a holy joy,
Such large reward of peace, why would you shake it?
Or is it now a time for doubts and fears,
When my soul's energy should be concentred
For one great trial? See you not, e'en now,
The spectre death is with me?

Philos. Cheer up, friend,
It is the nature of all sickness thus
To bring death near to the imagination,
Even as a telescope doth shew the moon

Just at our finger-ends without decreasing
The actual distance. Come, be not so gloomy;—
You have no business to be solitary;
A cheerful friend will bring back cheerfulness.
Have you perused the books I left with you?

Schol. I have, and like them not!

Philos. Indeed! indeed!
Are they not full of lofty argument
And burning eloquence? For a strong soul,
Baptized in the immortal wells of thought,
They must be glorious food!

Schol. Pardon me, sir,
They are too specious;—they gloss over error
With tinsel covering which is not like truth.
Oh! give them not to young and ardent minds,
They will mislead, and baffle and confound:
Besides, among the sages whom you boast of,
With their proud heathen virtues, can ye find
A purer, loftier, nobler character;
More innocent, and yet more filled with wisdom,
Fuller of high devotion—more heroic
Than the Lord Jesus—dignified yet humble;
Warring 'gainst sin, and yet for sinners dying?

Philos. Well; pass the men, what say you to the morals?

Schol. And where is the Utopian code of morals

But the near prospect of eternity
Takes from the gauds of earth their tempting'st lure;
No, no—it was a poor unmeet ambition
Which then was hot within me, and thank God,
Affecteth me no more!

Philos. Nay, but my friend,
For your dear mother's sake would you not leave
A noble name emblazoned on your tomb?

Schol. Can such poor, empty honours compensate
Unto a childless mother for her son?
You know her not, and me you know not either!

Philos. But think you, my young friend, learning is honoured
By every honour paid to its disciples:
Your tomb would be a shrine, to learning sacred.

Schol. There is more comfort, sir, unto my soul
To feel the smallest duty not neglected,
And my day's work fulfilled, than if I knew
This perishable dust would be interred
In kingly marble, and my name set forth
In pompous blazonry.

Philos. Not to be great—
You do mistake my drift—but greatly useful;
Surely you call not this unmeet ambition!

Schol. Sir, had the will of God ordained a wider,
A nobler sphere of usefulness on earth,

He would have given me strength, and health, and power
For its accomplishment. I murmur not
That little has been done, but rather bless Him
Who has permitted me to do that little;
And die content in his sufficient mercy,
Which has vouchsafed reward beyond my merit.

Philos. Nay, I must serve you! Let me but contribute
Unto your body's ease. This wretched room,
And its poor pallet—would you not desire
A lighter, airier, more commodious chamber,
Looking out to the hills; and where the shine
Of the great sun might enter—where sweet odours,
And almost spiritual beauty of fair flowers
Might gratify the sense—and you might fall
Gracefully into death, in downy ease?
Speak, and all this is yours!

Schol. Here will I die!
Here have I lived—here from my boyhood lived;
These naked walls are like familiar faces,
And that poor pallet has so oft given rest
To my o'erwearied limbs, there will I die!

Philos. But you do need physicians—here is gold,
I know the scholar's fee is scant enough!
I will go hence, and send you an attendant.

Schol. I cannot take your gold, I want it not,
My sickness is beyond the aid of man;
And soon, even now, I did expect my mother.

Philos. [*affecting sorrow.*] My dear young friend, I have to ask your pardon;
The letter that I promised to deliver,
I did forget—indeed I gave it not!

Schol. How have I trusted to a broken reed!
Oh mock me not with offers of your friendship,
Say not that you would serve me!
Oh my mother—
Poor, broken-hearted one, I shall not see thee!

[*He covers his face for a moment, then rises up with sudden energy.*

Whoe'er you are, and for what purpose come,
I know not—you have troubled me too long—
But something in my spirit, from the first,
Told me that you were evil; and my thought
Has often inly uttered the rebuke,
"Get thee behind me, Satan!" Leave me now—
Leave me my lonely chamber to myself,
And let me die in peace!

[*The Philosopher goes out, abashed. The scholar falls back into his chair, exhausted; after some time recovering, he faintly raises himself.*

'T is night-fall now—and through the uncurtained window
I see the stars; there is no moon to night.
Here then I light my lamp for the last time;
And ere that feeble flame has spent itself,
A soul will have departed!
Let me now
Close my account with life; and to affection,
And never-cancelled duty, give their rights:
[*He opens his Bible, and inscribes it.*
This I return to thee, my dearest mother,
Thy gift at first, and now my last bequest;
And these poor earnings, dust upon the balance
Compared with the great debt I owe to thee,
Are also thine—would I had more to give!
There lie you, side by side.
[*He lays a small sum of money with the Bible.*
Thou blessed book,
Full of redeeming knowledge, making wise
Unto salvation, and the holy spring
Of all divine philosophy—and thou poor dust,
For which the soul of man is often sold;
Yet wast thou not by evil traffic won,
Nor got by fraud, nor wrung from poverty—
God blessed the labourer while he toiled for thee,
And may'st thou bless the widow!—lie thou there—

I shall not need you more. I am departing
To the fruition of the hope of one,
And where the other cannot get admittance!
And now a few words will explain the rest:—

[*He writes a few words, which he encloses with them, and making all into a packet, seals them up.*

God comfort her poor heart, and heal its wounds,
Which will bleed fresh when she shall break this seal.

[*Shortly after this is done, he becomes suddenly paler—a convulsive spasm passes over him; when he recovers, he slowly rises, and kneels upon his pallet-bed.*

Schol. Almighty God! look down
Upon thy feeble servant! strengthen him!
Give him the victor's crown,
And let not faith be dim!
Oh, how unworthy of thy grace,
How poor, how needy, stained with sin!
How can I enter in
Thy kingdom, and behold thy face!
Except thou hadst redeemed me, I had gone
Without sustaining knowledge to the grave!
For this I bless thee, oh thou Gracious One,
And thou wilt surely save!

I bless thee for the life which thou hast crowned
With never-ending good;
For pleasures that were found
Like wayside flowers in quiet solitude.
I bless thee for the love that watched o'er me
Through the weak years of infancy,
That has been, like thine everlasting truth,
The guide, the guardian-angel of my youth.
Oh, Thou that didst the mother's heart bestow,
Sustain it in its woe,
For mourning give it joy, and praise for heaviness!

[*He falls speechless upon the bed.*
His mother enters hurriedly.

Mother. Alas, my son! and am I come too late? Oh, Christ! can he be dead?

Schol. [*looking up faintly.*] Mother, is 't thou? It is! it is! who summoned thee, dear mother?

Mother. A little boy, the latest of thy class; He left these walls at sunset, and came back With me e'en now. He told me of thy words, And of thy pallid cheek and trembling hand;— Sorrowing for all, but sorrowing most because Thou saidst he would behold thy face no more!

Schol. My soul doth greatly magnify the Lord For his unmeasured mercies!—and for this Great comfort, thy dear presence! I am spent—

The hand of death is on me! Ere the sun
Lightens the distant mountains, I shall be
Among the blessed angels! Even now
I see as 't were heaven opened, and a troop
Of beautiful spirits waiting my release!

Mother. My son! my son! and thou so young, so wise,
So well-beloved, alas, must thou depart!
Oh, rest thy precious head within mine arms,
My only one! —Thou wast a son indeed!

Schol. Mother, farewell! I hear the heavenly voices,
They call!—I cannot stay, farewell—farewell!

Choir of Spiritual Voices.

No more sighing,
No more dying,
Come with us, thou pure and bright!
Time is done,
Joy is won,
Come to glory infinite!
Hark! the angel-songs are pealing!
Heavenly mysteries are unsealing,
Come and see, oh come and see!

Oh, I should long to die!
To be among the stars, the glorious stars;
To have no bounds to knowledge; to drink deep
Of living fountains—to behold the wise,
The good, the glorified! to be with God,
And Christ, who passed through death that I might live!
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Philos. Cheer up, friend,
It is the nature of all sickness thus
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Even as a telescope doth shew the moon

thought over the baits for human souls — love — ambition — pleasure; but all these he rejected.— "For," said he, "is not avarice more absorbingly, more hopelessly cruel than all these? The lover may be fierce, ungovernable, extravagant; still is the passion in itself amiable. The man of ambition may wade through blood to a kingdom; yet even in his career, give evidence of good and great qualities. The votary of pleasure, though he sacrifice health, wealth, talents, and friends, yet has the moments when the soul, reacting upon itself, prays to be disenthralled. None are retrieveless; none are utterly alien to good, save the victim of avarice; for when did the soul, abandoned to this vice, feel misgivings? when did it feel either pity or love? or when did it do one good, thing, or repent of one evil thing? It will strip without remorse, the fatherless, the widow, nay even the very sanctuary of God! Avarice is the Upas of the soul — no green thing flourishes below it, no bird of heaven flies over it; and the dew and the rain, and the virtues of the earth, become pestilential because of it! It shall be the love of gold which shall be my next temptation."

THOMAS OF TORRES.

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THOMAS OF TORRES.

THOMAS OF TORRES.

PERSONS.

THOMAS OF TORRES.
ACHZIB, A STRANGER.
THE SECOND LORD OF TORRES.
ISABEL, A WIDOW, AND OTHER SUBORDINATE CHARACTERS.

Time occupied, one and twenty years.

SCENE I.

A green hill overlooking a broad valley, in the centre of which, among a few old trees, stands a noble mansion of grey stone; a fine lake appears in the winding of the valley, and the hill-sides are scattered with a few worthless old trees, the remnants of woods which have been felled.—Thomas of Torres comes forward, and throws himself on the grass.

Thomas. That was my home—the noble hall of Torres!
Mine were those meadows—yon bright lake was mine,
Where when a boy I fished, and swam, and hurled
Smooth pebbles o'er its surface; those green hills

Were mine, and mine the woods that clothed them—
This was my patrimony! a fair spot,
Than which this green and pleasant face of earth
Can shew none fairer! With this did descend
An honourable name—the lord of Torres!
An unimpeachable and noble name,
Without a blot on its escutcheon,
Till it descended to a fool like me—
A spendthrift fool, who is become a proverb!

My father was a good and quiet man—
He wedded late in life; and I was born
The child of his old age; my mother's face
I knew not, saving in its gilded frame,
Where, in the chamber of her loving husband,
It hung before his bed. My father died
When I was in my nonage. Marvellous pains,
Reading of books, study, and exercise,
Made me, they said, a perfect gentleman:
Such was the lord of Torres three years since!

He rode, he ran, he hunted, and he hawked,
And all exclaimed, "a gallant gentleman!"
He had his gay companions—what of that?
They said that youth must have its revelries.
He laughed, he sung, he danced, he drank his wine,

And all declared, "a pleasant gentleman!"
They came to him in need—his many friends—
Money he had in plenty, it was theirs!
He paid their debts; he gave them noble gifts;
He feasted them; he said, "they are my friends,
And what I have is their's!" and they exclaimed,
"Oh, what a noble, generous gentleman!"
He had his friends too, of another sort—
Fair women *that* seduced him with their eyes,—
For these he had his fetes; his pleasant shews;
His banquetings in forest solitudes,
Beneath the green boughs, like the sylvan gods:
And these repaid him with sweet flatteries,
And with bewitching smiles and honeyed words!

The lord of Torres did outgo his rents;
His many friends had ta'en his ready cash;
"What then!" said they, "thy lands are broad and rich,
Get money on them!" Ah, poor thoughtless fool,
He listened to their counsels!—Feasts and gifts,
And needy friends, again have made him bare!
"Cut down thy woods!" said they. He cut them down;
And then his wants lay open to the day,
And people said "this thriftless lord is poor!"

This touched his pride, and he grew yet more lavish.
" Come to my heart," said he, "my faithful friends ;
We 'll drink and laugh, to shew we yet can spend ! "
—" The woods are felled ; the money is all spent ;
What now remains ?—The land 's as good as gone,
The usurer doth take its yearly rent !"
So spake the lord again unto his friends :
" Sell house and all !" exclaimed the revellers.
The young lord went to his uneasy bed
A melancholy man. The portraits old
Looked from their gilded frames as if they spoke
Silent upbraidings—all seemed stern but one,
That youthful mother, whose kind eye and smile
Appeared to say, Return, my son, return !

The lord of Torres is a thoughtful man :
His days are full of care, his nights of fear ;
He heedeth not which way his feather sits ;
He wears the velvet jerkin for the silk ;
He hath forgot the roses in his shoes ;
He drinks the red wine and forgets the pledge ;
He hears the jest, and yet he laugheth not :
Then said his friends " Our lord hath lost his wits,
Let 's leave him ample space to look for them !"
They rode away, and left his house to silence ;
The empty rooms echoed the closing doors ;—

The board was silent! silent was the court,
Save for the barking of the uneasy hounds.
Soon spread those friends, the news of his distress!
And then again a crowd was at his doors:
This was a jeweller, and must be paid;
This was a tailor—this had sold perfumes,
This silks, and this confectionery and wine—
They must—they must be paid—they would be paid!

"The lord of Torres is a ruined man!"
So said the cunning lawyer;—and they sold
Horses and hounds and hawks, and then they said—
The house itself must go! The silent lord
Rose up an angry man: "Fetch me my horse!"
Said he; for now a thought had crossed his mind
Wherein lay hope.—Alas! he had no horse—
The lord of Torres walked a-foot that day!
"I 'll seek my friends!" said he, "my right good friends;
They 'll help me in my need, each one of them."
He sought their doors—this saw him through the blind,
And bade his valet say, he was abroad:
This spoke him pleasantly, and gave him wine,
And pledged him in the cup, his excellent friend!
But when he told the purport of his visit,
He shook his head, and said he had no gold,

Even while he paid a thousand pieces down
For a vain bauble! From another's lips
He heard the mocking words of "spendthrift,"—
"beggar."
The lord of Torres turned upon his heel,
And muttered curses while his heart was sad.
"There 's yet another friend," said he, "beloved
Beyond them all; for while I held them churls,
This was the chosen brother of my heart!"
The lord of Torres stood beside his gate;
There was a shew as for a festival.
"I come in a good hour!" said he to one
Who stood hard by—"what means this merry shew?"
"How! know you not," said he, "this very morn
The noble Count hath wedded the fair daughter
Of Baron Vorm!" The young lord's cheek is white,
His brain doth reel—he holds against the gate,
And hides his face that none may see his tears!
He back returned unto his father's house,
And entering in his chamber, barred the door,
And passed a night of sleepless agony!

The lord of Torres was an altered man:
A woe had shadowed o'er his countenance;
His speech was low, and tremulous, and sad;
He bore a wounded heart within his breast.
Then came his aged steward with streaming eyes,

And gave to him a little bag of gold;
"Take it," he said, "I won it in thy service,
And in the service of thy noble father!"
The lord of Torres took the old man's hand,
And wept as weeps a child; his heart was touched.
"Take back thy gold," said he; "I wasted mine,
Yet will I not expend thy honest gains:—
Friend, take it back—I will not touch thy gold!"

The house was sold—the lands, the lakes were sold,
And debts and charges swallowed up the price;
And now he is a landless, homeless man,—
He is no lord, he hath no heritage!
Thomas of Torres, get thee from this place,
What dost thou here?—art like a cursed sprite
Looking into the heaven that thou hast lost?
Ay, look and long—for yonder do they lie,
Thy fair lands and thy broad! Poor outcast wretch,
Thou may'st not set thy foot within those fields;
Thou may'st not pull a sapling from the hills;
Thou may'st not enter yon fair mansion-house—
Another man is called the lord of Torres!
Out with thee! thou art but a thriftless hind;
They 'll drive thee hence if thou but set thine eyes
Upon their fair possessions! What art now
Better than him who wins his bread by toil?
Better than that poor wretch who lives by alms?

thought over the baits for human souls — love — ambition — pleasure; but all these he rejected.— "For," said he, "is not avarice more absorbingly, more hopelessly cruel than all these? The lover may be fierce, ungovernable, extravagant; still is the passion in itself amiable. The man of ambition may wade through blood to a kingdom; yet even in his career, give evidence of good and great qualities. The votary of pleasure, though he sacrifice health, wealth, talents, and friends, yet has the moments when the soul, reacting upon itself, prays to be disenthralled. None are retrieveless; none are utterly alien to good, save the victim of avarice; for when did the soul, abandoned to this vice, feel misgivings? when did it feel either pity or love? or when did it do one good, thing, or repent of one evil thing? It will strip without remorse, the fatherless, the widow, nay even the very sanctuary of God! Avarice is the Upas of the soul — no green thing flourishes below it, no bird of heaven flies over it; and the dew and the rain, and the virtues of the earth, become pestilential because of it! It shall be the love of gold which shall be my next temptation."

THOMAS OF TORRES.

All that was mine I will win back to me—
All I have lost I will again possess—
Silver or gold, or love more precious still!
All that gave joy and beauty to my life,
Shall gladden and adorn it ere its close!
Hunger and thirst, and cold, and weariness
Shall not oppose me!—through the day I 'll toil,
And through the night I will lay ceaseless schemes!
Here, in the face of my ancestral home,
I make this solemn vow!—So help me God!

Strang. You have done well. The oath is good—
now keep it!
But I must part from you—my road lies hence.

Thos. My road lies any way.—I 'll go with you.

Stran. [*going forward*] The ground was good—
and now the seed is sown
Which will produce a harvest for my reaping!

[*Thomas remains, looking into the valley for a few moments, and then follows him.*

SCENE II.

The interior of a miserable hut, cold wood-ashes lie upon the hearth, and straw, as for a bed, in one corner.—Enter Thomas of Torres, in a miner's dress; he carries a lighted fagot in one hand, and a log in the other.

Thos. I 'll have a blaze anon.—The night is cold,
And firewood costs me nothing.

[*He lays wood upon the hearth, kindles it; and then bolting his door, sits down upon a log by the fire.*

'T is bright and warm!
These dry pine logs burn cheerily enough;
Hissing and crackling, blazing merrily,
They are good company—and better still,
They cost me nothing—do not call for wine,
Sauces and dainty meats, and savoury dishes—
They live without rich doublets—do not need
Gold-hilted swords, nor rings, nor laced cravats.
A fire 's a good, companionable friend,
A comfortable friend, who meets your face
With pleasant welcome, makes the poorest shed
As cheerful as a palace! Are you cold?
He warms you—weary? he refreshes you—
Hungry? he doth prepare your viands for you—
Are you in darkness? he gives light to you—
In a strange land, his face is that of one
Familiar from your childhood—are you poor?
What matters it to him? he knows no difference
Between an emperor and the poorest beggar!
Where is the friend that bears the name of man
Will do as much for you? When I was rich
I could have counted out a hundred men,

And said, "All these would serve me, were there need!"
And any one, or all, had sworn they would;
But when need came, where was the ready friend
Said "Here 's my purse, good fellow!"
Curse on them!
I had my liveried servants in those days;
Both men and maids I had to wait on me;
I slept on down; the hangings of my bed
Were damask; I did eat from silver;
All sorts of meats, and rare elaborate dishes
Were set before me, with the choicest wines;
Upon my hands I wore most dainty rings,
And of the whiteness of my hands did boast!
Look at them now—hardened and seamed and dark;
I wear no jewels now—I drink no wine.
A crust of bread, and a poor herb or two
Make up my daily meal;—my couch is straw;
I have no liveried servants—and what then?
Am I the less a man than in those days?
My limbs I use—and I use all my senses;
I see, hear, feel, taste, smell as I did then.
Go to! thou hast not lost much by the change!
Ay, but thou hast! thou wast a rich man then,
Had'st friends, at least thy riches made them for thee—
Wast loved—poor wretch!—art loved now thinkest thou?
Look at thy sordid frame—look at thy garb—

Look at thy blackened face, thy length of beard,
Thy uncombed, tangled locks, could *she* love *thee?*
'T is but a process I am passing through;
To-day the grub, but on the morrow morn
The painted butterfly!

[*A rap is heard at his door. Thomas, starting, deadens the light with ashes, and carefully covers something in a hole in the wall—the rap is heard again.*

Trav. [*without*] For God's sake, worthy Christian, give me shelter.

Thos. Who are you—and what brings you to this door?

Trav. A weary traveller who hath lost his way;
And chance has brought me here.—I am sore spent;
The night is chill and stormy, give me shelter.

Thos. My hut is no fit place for guest to lodge in!
I 've neither chair nor table, bread nor wine.

Trav. But you have fire—and a good roof above you!

Thos. A little further on a village lieth;
You 'll there get fire and shelter, and good cheer.

Trav. Direct me there.

Thos. [*carefully opening his door*] First you must pass the mines;
Then cross yon woody ridge; the hamlet lies
Below, in the next valley.

Trav. Thank you, friend;
And yet the way is long, and the night dark.

Thos. 'T is scarce a league—follow yon trembling star,
O'er the old tower; you cannot miss the way.

[*he shuts to the door, and bars it.*

Am I to lodge all weary travellers?
If he got shelter, he 'd be asking food.
No, no, i' faith, the world was none so ready
To give me aught—I 've feasted guests enow!

[*he puts out his fire, and then throws himself on the straw.*

SCENE III.

A fine moonlight night.—A lonely field in the extremity of the valley of Torres.—Enter Thomas with an ass, he takes off the bridle and turns it to graze.

Thomas. There, thou poor, half starved, patient animal,
There 's grass, rare, green grass for thee! eat thy fill,
Would thou could'st take a store for forty days!
This once was mine—I tell thee, it was mine!
I know it inch by inch—yon leafy hedge
Is hazel every twig. I little dreamed
When I was wandering here a happy boy,
The time would come when I should steal in here
A thief o' nights!

Ah, I remember well—
There is a little hollow hereabout,
Where wild-briar roses, and lithe honeysuckle
Made a thick bower; 't was here I used to come,
To read sweet books of witching poetry!
Could it be I? No, no, I am so changed,
I will not think this man was once that boy;
The thought would drive me mad! I will but think
I once knew one who called this vale his own;
I will but think I knew a merry boy,
And a kind, gentle father, years agone,
Who had their dwelling here; and that the boy
Did love this lonely nook, and used to find
Here the first nests of summer; here did read
All witching books of glorious poetry;
And then, that as the boy became a youth,
And gentle feeling strengthened into passion,
And love became the poetry of life,
Hither he wandered, with a girlish beauty,
Gathering, like Proserpine, sweet meadow-flowers;
And that they sate beneath the wild-briar rose,
And that he then did kiss that maiden's cheek
The first time as a lover! Oh my God!
That was the heir of Torres—a brave boy,
A noble-hearted boy! he grew a man,
And what became of him? Ha! pass we that—
[illegible]new not what became of him!

[*He advances into the hollow.*

'T is even as then! this bower hath little changed,
But hearts have changed since then—and thoughts have changed,
And the great purpose of a life hath changed!
Oh that I were a bird among these boughs,
To live a summer life of peace and joy;
To never fret my soul for broken faith;
To have no onward hope, no retrospection!——
Ah! there 's the tiny glow-worm as of old!
It is a lovely thing. O me! how much
That 's beautiful and pure have I forgotten!
Years is it since a glow-worm crossed my thoughts,
And it was the bright marvel of my boyhood—
A fire, and yet so cold! let 's feel it now,
If 't is as it was then. [*He stoops to pick it up.*
Heavens, it is gold!
And here is more! bright, shining, glorious gold!
[*He pulls away moss and roots, and draws out a small bag of gold coin.*
Let me into the moonlight—gold, gold, gold!
A hoard of shining gold: here lieth more
Than I have saved in seven years' weary toil,
And honest gain—this is some robber's booty—
It were no sin to take a robber's gold,
[*A step is heard approaching.*
Ha! some one comes!
[*He shrinks into the shade, and lies close under the bank.*

Man. Now, by your leave, good friend,
Who may you be?

Thos. A poor night traveller,
Who takes up his cheap quarters 'neath the hedges.

Man. I 'm in the like case too. But, honest friend,
I have a little liking for your pillow,
May'st please you take the farther side o' the bed!

Thos. First come, first served — it is a well known adage.

Man. Come, come my friend, these are my ancient quarters;
I have a foolish liking for this spot—
All are alike to you—

Thos. I have possession,
And will maintain it!

Man. It shall then be tried!

[*He lays hold on Thomas, and they struggle together.*

Ha! ha, you thief, then you have got the bag!

Thos. I have!

Man. You villain! you marauding thief!

[*Thomas rushes into the thicket— the man follows.*

Man. [*within the thicket.*] I am a dead man, help! oh, I am murdered!
Christ help me! I am murdered!

Thos. [*rushing out.*] He is not! no!
Cuffs do not murder men! [*he runs off.*

SCENE IV.

A cave by the sea shore.—Enter Thomas of Torres; he takes out the bag.

Thos. Now let me count—now let me see my gains.
Ah! it reminds me of the thirty pieces,
The price of blood! I would give every piece
To know he were not dead! A murderer—
Thomas of Torres a night murderer!
No, 't is not so! they were not killing blows—
I will not think of it!
Now let me count—
[*he counts out a hundred pieces.*
Oh, thou most goodly thing—most lovely gold!
Dearer unto my soul than meat or drink;
More beautiful than woman! Glorious gold,
I love thee as a youth his earliest mistress!
Come to my heart, thou bright and beautiful—
Come, come! [*he hugs the gold.*
Bright prize, I care not how I won thee,
I 'll ease my heart with thee! A hundred pieces!
Had it been five-and-twenty—even fifty,
I might have groaned for that poor wretch's groan—

But for a hundred brave, broad, golden pieces
I 'll groan not.

[*He takes off his belt, and then securely fixing them in it, fastens it round his body.*

Thou shalt be my true breast-plate,
My heart's joy, my night and day companion!
But hence! this is no land of safety for me.

[*he goes out.*

SCENE V.

Several years afterwards.—A dark night in a distant country.—A field of battle covered with dead.—Enter Thomas of Torres with a small lantern in his hand.

Thos. Rings; dagger-sheaths; gold chains and spurs; massy gold embroidery—this is all clear gain —no deduction for agents—no plaguy discount—all net profit! [*he gropes among the bodies.*] But ha!—thou art worth looking after! Come, my young gentleman, I 'll be your valet! —Let go your sword. Poor wretch! that was a strong death-grasp! Now off with your rings!—one, two, three! I 'll lay my life thou wast a coxcomb — a fine blade, with wit as keen as thy sword's edge. [*he tears open the pockets*] Empty, empty! I 'd be sworn he expended his gold on his outside—I 've known such in my day!

[*he goes forward;—a groan is heard.*

Thos. Here 's life among the dead!—mercy! that sound
In this unearthly silence chills my blood.

A faint Voice. For the dear love of Christ, be 't friend or foe,
Make short my death!

Thos. What, art thou sick of life?

Voice. It is not life—it is a living death!

Thos. [*approaching him, and looking at him attentively*]. Ha! thou 'rt an argosy with treasure laden!

Voice. My sword is at my head — for pity's sake,
Make short work with it!

Thos. [*seizing his hand.*] Gems worthy of a king!

Wounded Man [*raising himself.*] Off with thee, thou accursed plunderer,—
Thou stony-hearted wretch, off, off!

[*He faintly strikes him off, and then falls back dead.—Thomas proceeds to strip the body.*

Thou art a magazine of gems and gold!

[*he draws a gold chain from his neck.*

What, more? Some love-gift!—'T was a heavenly lady,
For whom our earthly gold was all too mean,
That she was set with lustrous pearls o' the sea—
Let 's see this radiant jewel of a lady!
Heavens! it is Isabel—the gentle queen
Of my young love—and this was her good lord!

Methought the voice had a familiar tone.
Mine ancient friend! thus have I paid thee back
The treachery of thy wooing.—Yet, poor Count,
My heart misgives me for despoiling thee—
And thou, bright Isabel! it was for thee
I made the solemn vow, which I am keeping;
Accursed, wretched spoiler, that I am!
Let me begone! I will not look again
Upon a dead man's face—at least to-night!

[*he gathers up his spoil, and goes slowly off.*

SCENE VI.

A foreign city.—A miserable den-like room, surrounded with iron chests, secured with heavy padlocks — the door and windows grated and barred.—Thomas of Torres sitting at a desk, with pen and ink before him.

Enter A FINE GENTLEMAN.

Gent. Good morrow, most excellent sir!

Thos. Humph!

Gent. I have the misfortune, sir, to need a thousand gold pieces, and knowing your unimpeachable honour, I have pleasure in asking the loan from you.

Thos. Humph!

Gent. Your rate of interest, sir, is ——?

Thos. Thirty per cent. for spendthrift heirs, and two responsible sureties.

Gent. The terms are hard, sir.

Thos. They are the terms!

Gent. Sir, twenty per cent. is high interest: elsewhere—

Thos. Then go elsewhere!

[*The Gentleman turns on his heel, and goes out whistling.*

Thos. The jackanapes!

Enter A GRIM-LOOKING MAN.

Man. He cannot pay, sir; he declares it impossible, and prays you to have patience; — and in the meantime leaves in your hand this casket.

Thos. [*opening it*] Baubles! — Can 't pay! — impossible!—I say I *will* be paid!

Man. His ship was lost in the squall—he must sell the furniture of his house to cover your demand, and he prays you to have mercy on his wife and children!

Thos. Wife and children! talk not to me of wives and children!—I 'll have my money!

Man. I tell you, sir, it is impossible, without you seize his goods.

Thos. Then take the city bailiff, and get them appraised.

Man I cannot do it, sir! — You shall see him yourself. [*aside*] The nether mill-stone is running water compared to his heart! [*he goes out.*

Thos. Twenty thousand gold pieces, and seven months' interest—and give that up because a man has wife and children.—Ha! ha! ha!

[*he resumes his pen, and calculates interest.*

Enter A GENTLEMAN, *with a depressed countenance.*

Gent. Sir, my misfortunes are unparalleled—
My ship was stranded in the squall last week,
And now my wife is at the point of death!

Thos. Produce your sureties!

Gent. They have proved false—
Alas! they proved themselves false friends indeed!
They left the city ere I knew my loss,
And are not to be found.

Thos. Thou wast a fool
To put thy trust in friends; all friends are false!

Gent. [*pointing to the casket*] This casket, sir, I sent to you in pledge;
It holds the jewels of my dying wife,—
She will not need them more!

Thos. I 'll not accept it!
I 'll have my money, every doit of it,
Principal and interest, paid down this day!

Gent. Inhuman wretch! — will you profane the chamber
Of my poor dying wife!

Thos. I 'll have my money!

[*The Gentleman, in great agitation, lays down a bundle of parchments before him.*

Thos. Well, what of these?

Gent. Give me the further sum
Of twenty thousand pieces on these lands—
These parchments will be surety for the whole!

Thos. [*glancing over them.*] The lands of Torres! ha! ha! ha!—and you 're ——?

Gent. The lord of Torres.

Thos. How shall I be sure
Of the validity of these same deeds?

Lord of T. I 've heard it said that you are of that country;
If so, the signatures of its late lords,
Father and son, may be well known to you.

Thos. [*carefully examining them.*] I had some knowledge of them—these are theirs:
And you give up your right unto this lordship
For the consideration of the sum
Of twenty thousand pieces?

Lord of T. No, no, sir;
That doth exceed my meaning.

Thos. Then pay down
The original sum, with interest, or a prison
Shall be your home this night.

Lord of T. 'T would be unjust
To give away my children's patrimony!

Thos. Sir, take your choice.—Resign this petty lordship,
Or go you to the prison!

[*He resumes his pen, and sits down doggedly to his calculations.*

Lord of T. Ah, my wife,—
My little innocent and helpless children!

Thos. Your home shall be a dungeon on the morrow!

Lord of T. Thou cruel bloodsucker! thou most inhuman,
Most iron-hearted scrivener!

Thos. Spare your tongue!
Ill words obtain not men's consideration—
Pay down the principal and interest!

Lord of T. Sir, forty thousand pieces for the lordship
Of Torres were a miserable price—
Too cheap were it at sixty thousand pieces!

Thos. I know these lands of Torres—sore run out:
Woods felled—house fallen to decay—I know it;
A ruined, a dilapidated place!

Lord of T. So did the last possessor leave it, sir—
A graceless spendthrift heir, so did he leave it;
'T is now a place of beauty—a fair spot,
None fairer under the broad face of heaven!

Thos. Sir, I am no extortioner, God knows;

I love fair, upright dealings! I will make
The twenty thousand pieces you have asked
A thousand pieces more, and drop my claim
To the whole sum of interest which is due!

Lord of T. Forty-one thousand pieces, and five hundred—
'T is a poor price for the rich lands of Torres!

Thos. You do consent—let 's have a notary.

Lord of T. Give me till night to turn it in my thoughts.

Thos. I 'll give you not an hour! — not e'en a minute! [*he stamps on the floor with his foot.*

Enter a BOY.

Quick, fetch the notary! [*exit Boy.*

[*The lord of Torres covers his face with his hands—Thomas of Torres resumes his calculations.*

SCENE VII.

The hold of a ship.—Thomas of Torres seated upon an iron chest, and another beside him.—Enter a lady, wrapped in a long cloak and veiled; two younger ones follow, supporting a third—the master of the vessel follows them.

Lady. Are these, good sir, the best accommodations?

Master. Unless you pay the price of what are better.

Lady. [*throwing back her veil, and shewing a fair but sad countenance*]

Sir, I have told you more of our distress
Than may be pleasing to a stranger's ear;
I seek no favours on my own account,
But for my youngest child, my dying daughter—

Mast. [*turning towards the young lady*]

Poor, delicate young thing! Oh no, not here
Is a fit place for that poor, dying lady—
Follow me madam. She shall have my cabin;
But stay my gentle mistress, lean on me!

[*he supports the young lady out, and the others follow.*

Thos. Why, yonder is the lady of the pearls—
The Isabel of my fond, boyish passion!
And she is poor, is burdened with three daughters!
Four women in a house would be expensive!
I was a fool to think I e'er should marry—
Marry, forsooth, a widow with four daughters,
And a *poor* widow too! No, I 'll not marry!
'T is well they 're gone;—if they had seen me here
She might have asked for help in her distress,
And 't would have seemed ungracious to refuse her.
But I 'll beware, and keep out of her sight,
I 'll warrant me, her eyes are sharp enough!

SCENE VIII.

A small chamber in the house of Torres.—Thomas as the lord of Torres, with money-bags on his table.

Lord of T. I am the lord of Torres! that one thought
Is with me night and day. The lord of Torres!
A rich lord, who need borrow gold nor silver,
But will add heaps unto his countless heaps,
Gold to his gold, and silver to his silver!

[*A low rap is heard, and a poor widow enters timidly.*

Widow. Pardon, my lord: I am an aged widow,
Whose children's children's bread depends upon me.
I hold a little field, which we have held,
In my dead husband's time, for forty years.
The field to us, is as the staff of life;
Good tenants have we been, and regular,
Never have missed our rent on quarter day;
But now your wealthy neighbour, John o'Nokes,
Desires to have the field to add to his—
He will be here anon to make his offer;
Oh my good lord, befriend a feeble widow,
And her poor fatherless babes!
'T is not for me,
To make a worthy offering to my lord—

We are but poor—the field is all our wealth;
But what I have, I offer in submission.

[*She lays a few small silver coins before him, and a gold ring.*

Lord of T. You shall not be disturbed in your possession!

Wid. Ten thousand blessings on your noble lordship! [*she goes out.*

Lord of T. [*testing the ring and coins*] They 're sterling gold and silver, though the weight
Is small; but every little addeth to the whole.

Enter JOHN O'NOKES.

John [*bowing very low.*] There is a little field—a worthless field,
My noble lord, which brings you little profit
As 't is now let; and seeing it adjoins
My land, and is upon the utmost verge
Of your estate, I fain would buy it from you.

Lord of T. I have no thought to sell that little field.

John. My lord, its worth is small to your estate;
To mine 't is otherwise—and she who rents it,
Is poor, and hath no management of land.

Lord of T. She pays her rent as true as quarter-day.

John. That rent is small: my price would yield you more.

Lord of T. I would not do her wrong, she is a widow!

John. She is a widow only through their crime.
Her husband died for murder—a foul murder,
Done in this very field!

Lord of T. This very field!

John. Yes, my good lord. Some nineteen years agone.
Within a lonesome hollow of this field—
A wandering pedlar was discovered, murdered.
His ass, and all his little merchandise
Were found within this woman's husband's shed.
The facts were clear against him, though he swore
Unto the last that he was innocent—
And as was just, he died upon the gallows!
But you are pale, my lord—you 're very pale!

Lord of T. Pardon me, sir, my health is not the best.

John. Well, sir, about the business of the field.

Lord of T. The widow woman still shall hold the field!

John. [*laying a small bag before him*]. But my good lord, to me it is an object—
One hundred marks, I'll give you for the field.

Lord of T. What doth this hold, sir: is it gold or silver?

John. Gold, sir, each piece is gold!

Lord of T. One hundred marks?—
One hundred marks and ten, and it is yours!

John. Sir, every piece within that bag is gold!

Lord of T. One hundred marks and ten—I 'll take no less!

John. My notary is without—I 'll bring him in.

[*he goes out.*

Lord of T. I 'll not believe it! Other men had asses—

And others might be murdered in that field;
Besides, if it were so, was it my crime
That the land's law did deal unjustly by him?
Upon their heads, who heard him plead in vain,
Shall be his innocent blood, and not on mine!

[*he takes up the bag.*

Ha! ha! this wealthy purchaser has gold
In plenty, if he thus can bribe. May be
I have another little field will tempt him;
But next time, I will have a better price—
Now let me find a place wherein to store it!

[*he considers for a few moments—then takes up his keys, and goes to a small closet.*

SCENE IX.

A chamber lighted by a small iron lamp, the lord of Torres in his night-cap and dressing-gown—a closet with an iron door is beside his bed, he has a bunch of keys in his hand.—Enter AN OLD SERVANT.

Servant. Master, there is a woman at the door,
And two small children; they do cry for bread;
Only a little morsel!

Lord of T. Drive them hence!
A murrain on them!

Serv. I have warned them hence,
But master, she is dying; and the cry
Of those poor little children wrings my heart!

Lord of T. Liars they are, and thieves! Drive them away!

Serv. Master, good lack! she will be dead ere morning!

Lord of T. Then elsewhere let her die! Bethink you fool,
'T would cost a noble, but to bury her!

Serv. [*going out*] Good lord! and he such plenty!

Enter STEWARD.

Steward. The barns are full, my lord, and there is yet grain to be housed.

Lord of T. The cost were great to build more barns—let it be housed under this roof.

Stew. My lord!

Lord of T. To be sure! the state-rooms are large and lofty—and to me they are useless, let them be filled!

Stew. What! with the gilt cornices, and the old lords and ladies on the walls!

Lord of T. The same! are they not well placed, so that a wain might approach without impediment?

Stew. It were a mortal sin!

Lord of T. I cannot afford to build new barns—remember the mildew last season, and the cow that died in March—these are great losses!

Stew. Well, my lord, the harvest is ready, it must be done quickly.

Lord of T. A broad door-way making, will not cost much; send me a builder to-morrow, and let us have an estimate—these people require being tied down to the farthing! [*the steward goes out.*

[*The lord of Torres unlocks his iron door, counts his bags, puts his keys under his pillow, and then lies down—after some time, he starts up.*

Fire! murder! thieves! my gold! my iron chest!
They will break in, and rob my iron chest!

[*he rubs his eyes, and looks around him.*

Was it a dream? thank heaven, it was a dream!
Then all is safe—my iron chest is safe!

[*he feels for his keys.*

Ay, they are safe, the keepers of my treasures—
Now let me sleep—I 've much to do to-morrow.
I must be wary in this estimate.
One half the sum he asks will be enough!

[*he lies down and sleeps.*

[*An awful voice passes through the chamber.*

"Thou fool, this night thy soul will be required from thee; then whose will those things be which thou has provided?"

Achzib was abundantly satisfied with the result of his second temptation. He had watched the gradual strengthening of the passion; the sealing up, as it were, of the heart against both God and man.

"It was not," said Achzib, in great self-gratulation, "because the temptation was in itself strong, that I have this time been so successful, but especially because the tempted was so wisely chosen. Human nature has a strange propensity to extremes; he who wastes his patrimony with profligate indifference, and reduces himself to penury, is of all others the man to become insatiably avaricious. In proportion as he lavished in youth, will he hoard up in age; the hand that threw away thousands, will afterwards clutch at groats,—and, oh marvellous inconsistency! not from having learned the value of the good he has abused, but from a passionate lust of possession, which, like the extravagance of madness, seems to reverse the very nature of the man."

"The world," continued Achzib, "has but little sympathy for the ruined spendthrift; men are slow in giving to him who has not taken care of his own—and thus they assist the reaction of his spirit. He talks of the faithlessness of friends, of the jeers and taunts of the world, and the triumph of enemies, till, exciting himself to hostility against his kind, he commences a warfare upon it, and becomes its scourge and its shame. He gives not to the needy; because, says he, in my need, none gave to me—and he gets all he can by fair means and foul, because in his abundance all, he believes, made a prey of him. Oh, most blind and senseless of passions!—he would even rob himself, to enrich his coffers—he would deny himself even sustenance, were it not that death would sever him from the god of his idolatry!"

"And now," said Achzib, "I will try this passion in a modified degree, upon another and a nobler spirit. The sins of Thomas of Torres, comparatively speaking, were sins against society at large. My next victim shall be taken from the bosom of affection; he shall bring desolation upon the domestic hearth, and wither those souls in which he was bound up as in the bundle of life. To accomplish this, I must first sap, if not remove the barriers of sound principle. But once familiarize him with sin; but

once induce him to sunder some one tie which has hitherto bound him to virtue,—no matter how slight it be,—the most important work is done, and the remaining ties become loosened: for the first dereliction of duty, the first swerving aside from the integrity of virtue, is the act by which a human soul becomes the chartered victim of evil."

"The mere sordid miser," continued Achzib, recuring once more to his subject, "is a hateful spectacle. The toad hiding itself under a noisome stone, is not more hideous than his moral deformity; but the downfal of a nobler spirit, drawing, as it were, the seventh part of heaven after it, in the darkened pleasures, the wounded affections of all that clung to it, is an achievment worthy of the Prince of Darkness himself!"

THE PIRATE.

THE PIRATE.

PERSONS.

ALBERT LUBERG, THE PIRATE.
MADAME LUBERG, HIS MOTHER.
CONSTANCE, HER NIECE, AND THE BETROTHED OF ALBERT.
ACHZIB, THE CAPTAIN OF THE VESSEL.
EDAH, A YOUNG ISLANDER.
SEAMEN, CREW OF THE WRECK, MERCHANTS, AND TOWNS-PEOPLE.

SCENE I.

A seaport city.—Evening.—A small mansion in the suburbs; Constance sitting in a little room, looking at a miniature.

Constance. There is a faint resemblance—but so faint!
And yet the eyes in colour are the same—
So is the hair, with its thick clustering curls—
And the fine oval of the countenance;
But oh, the mouth! no, no, it is not Albert's!
And yet, when he is absent, I shall say
'T is like, 't is very like! Oh, how I wish

This voyage were made! my heart has fearful
auguries;
And when I pray for him, my spirit takes
All unawares such fervency of tone
As terrifies myself. Great God protect him!

Enter MADAME LUBERG; *she sits down by Constance.*

Mad. L. I am the bearer of most heavy tidings!

Cons. Is Albert dead?

Mad. L. Oh no, oh no, thank heaven!
Compared with that, my news is light indeed!
The sudden squall that came and passed at noon,
Like lightning in its speed, loosened his vessel
From its strong moorings, drove it out of harbour,
And there, in half a moment, it went down!
All, all is lost, not even a single bale
Is come to shore!

Cons. And any lives on board?

Mad. L. But two, the helmsman and a cabin-boy;
The others were gone out by Albert's leave,
To pass the day on shore. God help him now!
For there went down his all.—All, all was ventured
In that one cargo; he 's a beggar now!
No longer Albert Luberg the young merchant,
On whom the old grey-headed men on 'Change
Looked with respect 'cause fortune favoured him!
Yet that was the least reason he should win

A wise man's grace—was he not good and kind?
A prudent, generous captain; loved by all,
And served with such devotion that his crew
Symbolled fidelity? and such a son!
Oh, there is not a mother in the city,
But, when impressing on her child its duty,
Says, "be thou but a son like Albert Luberg!"

[*she weeps.*

Cons. This is our consolation, not our sorrow!
God will not let him want a helping hand—
He only tries him thus, to prove his virtue.
But hark—his step! Oh, 't is his step indeed!

Enter ALBERT.

Mad. L. God give thee comfort in this great affliction,
And make it work together for thy good!

Albert. Mother, your prayer is answered—so is yours,
Dear Constance, for I see you have been weeping,
Like my poor mother; but you've won from heaven
Blessing for one unworthy as I am!

Cons. No, not unworthy, Albert! But what blessing?

Albert. Oh, you shall hear—it is a new romance!
Now listen. I was standing on the rocks,
With my eyes fixed upon the boiling spot

Where my good ship went down, full of sad thoughts,
When there came up a foreign gentleman,
Drest in an antique garb. Awhile he stood
With his eye fixed on me, and then he spake
Some cruel words of passing condolence,
Which I more briefly answered; for my heart
Lay with my sunken ship, nor had I mood
To talk with any one; so I went further,
And took another station: there he came,
And once again addressed me; "Sir," said he,
"I am no stranger to your reputation—
All men have heard the name of Albert Luberg,
And from my soul I ever longed to serve him!"

Mad. L. 'Twas very true, 't was very true, my son;
Yet like I not these over-civil men.

Albert. Nay, hear me on. To this I made reply,
"Your good opinion flatters me too much!"
To which he said, "Merit is diffident,"
And twenty other gracious common-places;
And so discourse went on: at length, said he—
And here his voice assumed another tone,
The blandest, the most winning e'er I heard,
"Will you to sea again?" "Gladly," said I,
"For diligence must give me fortune back:
Those that are dearer unto me than life,
Depend upon my labour." "Done!" said he,
"You shall win fortune back! now look you there;

Beyond that point of rock, my vessel lies!"
I looked, and in a distant cove descried
A stately vessel lying at its anchor.
"Yon ship," said he, "is mine, well-manned and freighted
For a far port."

Cons. And do you sail with him?

Albert. I do, dear love, even this very night
If the wind favour, when the moon shall rise;
Soon after midnight will they weigh the anchor.

Cons. And to what port? and who is this strange captain—
And what the vessel's name?

Albert. I was so chained
By the strong fascination of his voice,
I thought not of his name, nor of the vessel's;
Our destination, is unto the east.

Mad. L. It is a compact that comes o'er my heart
Like evil influence.

Albert. 'T is woman's fear
Makes you desponding. If I went with Raphael,
Like Tobit in old time, you would have fear
And augury of ill! Heard you my friend,
His easy gaiety, his frank good-humour,
His almost fatherly kindness for your son,
You would not have one fear!
But, dearest Constance,

Here is a parting present, to console you
When I am far away!
[*he holds up a chain of diamonds.*
Cons. No, not console me!
But Albert, whence came these? so beautiful,
A dowry for an empress!
Mad. L. Here is wealth
Might make thy vessel's loss of small account—
Their value frightens me! where came they from?
Albert. They are an earnest from my unknown friend,
Of my redeemed fortune. They were given
For thee, dear Constance, with such pleasant raillery
On woman's love of show, as made me envy
The sportive keenness of his merry wit.
Mad. L. God send it all for good! But tell me now
On what conditions, sail you with this man?
Albert. On strange conditions truly, for himself;
For me, without exception. Thus they run:
That without bond, or even doit laid down,
I shall become co-partner in the vessel,
Now and for ever, and in all her tradings
Have equal share, with this sole stipulation,
That I shall hold myself to him subservient.
To this I have subscribed; and by a notary
It has been sealed and witnessed in due form.
Mad. L. I like it not! For in these sordid times

Men do not willingly give up their profit
Without equivalent. But God is good!
And He will guard you if you trust in him.
My son, a mother's blessing be with thee!
But there are various little stores and comforts
Which 't is your mother's privilege to furnish,
I will go get these ready, though 't is late!

[*she goes out.*

Albert. [*taking Constance's hand.*] Dear love, you look so pale, so very anxious!
Why are you thus cast down?

Cons. Must we not part?
And then I have so many, many fears!
I say "amen" to all your mother uttered;—
I do not like this man!

Albert. Fear nothing, love!
Ere long I will return; and then, sweet Constance,
You know your promise for that blessed time—
Till then be happy, dear one! laugh and sing
As you were wont, and fill the house with gladness,
As the birds fill the woods in summer time.

Cons. [*taking up the diamonds.*] But these—I cannot wear them! take them back—
I have a superstitious dread of them—
They are like the thirty pieces in the Scripture,
The price of blood!

Albert. Oh, foolish, foolish girl!

But you shall wear them! They are amulets—
And will grow dim if I am false to you!

Cons. Oh, take them, take them hence! they are so heavy!

[*she falls on his neck and weeps.*

Albert. My dearest one! look up, and let me kiss
Away these idle tears.

Cons. Oh, Albert, Albert!
I know that we shall never meet again—
I know that some great sorrow hangeth o'er us—
True love has ever a prophetic spirit!

Mad. L. [*coming in.*] Here is a messenger come down in haste
To summon you—the boat is at the quay!

Albert. Truly he keeps quick time! — The moon's not up—
But we must part at last,—and farewell 's said
As easily now as at another time.
My dearest love, good bye!
Mother, God bless you!

Mad. L. Farewell, my son — may God Almighty bless you.

[*He looks upon them with great tenderness, then goes out, and shortly after returns.*

Albert. I am a fool, a very childish fool,
Thus to return to say "good-bye" again;
But my heart yearned toward you, and I obeyed it.

Once more, dear mother, let me kiss thy cheek,
And take once more thy blessing!

[*he embraces her solemnly.*

And, sweet love, [*to Cons.*

Once more, once more farewell! What ails my heart?
I never was so much a child before.

Cons. May God in heaven bless you!

[*Albert rushes out.*

SCENE II.

Night.—A vessel on the mid seas; a fine moon shining.
—The watch on deck.

1*st Man.* Now, messmate, can you understand what sort of trip we are on?

2*nd Man.* Trading, I take it. Ar'n't we bound to the Indies?

1*st Man.* So they say; but mark me if there is n't some other scheme at bottom. Here have we been tacking about in these seas for the last fifteen days, and a steady wind blowing all the time! The old captain gives orders through the young one — the devil 's at the bottom of the business, I say.

2*nd Man.* And let it be the devil himself!—while he gives the wages he does, and plenty of grog, I 'll go round the world with him. Don't you bother

your brains with other folks' business;—let 's have a song! here 's mine without asking for, the jolly song of the devil at sea—

" Let the winds blow———"

1*st Man.* Don't be singing that song for ever, or I 'll take it for a bad token. — Can't you give us a good hymn, or a song set to a hymn-tune?

2*nd Man.* Why, one might think you were growing godly in your old age — ha! ha! ha!— You 're mighty particular for a fellow that loves the can! A hymn-tune, on my conscience—ha! ha! ha! Well, here goes, then——

Who was the first sailor?—tell me who can;
Old Father Neptune?—No, you 're wrong;
There was another ere Neptune began;
Who was he? tell me. Tightly and strong
Over the waters he went—he went,
Over the waters he went!

Who was the first sailor?—tell me who can;
Old Father Noah?—No, you 're wrong;
There was another ere Noah began;
Who he was, tell me? Tightly and strong
Over the waters he went—he went,
Over the waters he went,

Who was the first sailor?—tell me who can;
Old Father Jason?—No, you're wrong;
There was another ere Jason began;
Don't be a blockhead, boy! Tightly and strong
Over the waters he went—he went,
Over the waters he went!

Ha! 't is nought but the poor little Nautilus—
Sailing away in his ancient shell;
He has no need of a compass like us,
Foul or fair weather, he manages well!
Over the water he goes—he goes,
Over the water he goes!

Helmsman. Land a-head!—Down with you, to the captains below, and don't keep dinning there with your cracked pipes!

Enter the CAPTAIN *and* ALBERT.

Cap. The isle I told you of! 't is in our reckoning,
But 't is an undiscovered island yet
By any but myself. In my last voyage,
Thus standing on the deck, helmsman myself
And watch, I first discerned it on a night
Radiant as this, yet do I claim it not—
Yours be the honour of discovering it!
You shall first give the knowledge to the world
Of a new paradise amid the sea.

Albert. How bright the moonlight falls upon its shores!—
What slumberous shades lie in those woody valleys—
What sky-ascending mountains, with white peaks
Shining like silver spires!—and what a weight
Of spicy odour comes on every breeze!
Oh, glorious land! surpassing all my dreams
Of Eden while the angels walked in it.
But let 's cast anchor here—the soundings taken,
Are seven fathom water with good anchorage.

Cap. Let it be done!

[*The anchor is cast—all hands crowd on deck, eagerly looking out. — Morning begins to break.—The Captain and Albert stand together on the forecastle.*

Cap. Now, friend, you will acknowledge your suspicion
Has done me great injustice!

Albert. Pardon me!
I was indeed unjust—I was impatient
Of our long wandering.—My brain grew weary
With reckoning latitude and longitude,
Month after month—beside, the crew began
To have, like me, suspicions—and to murmur.
But you must pardon me! Give me your hand—
I will not doubt you more!

Cap. [*taking his hand eagerly*] No, doubt me not!
Swear you will trust in me from this day forth!

Albert. I will—I will;—and by yon glorious isle,
Over whose eastern summits kindles now
The splendour of the sunrise, I will swear
To serve you, put free confidence in you.
Good heavens! there hath a sudden cloud arisen
Which hath obscured the morning!

Cap. You have sworn!
Now contemplate the island at your leisure.—
Now is he my sure victim, and for ever! [*aside.*
Yon fairy isle will so subdue his soul
With its luxurious pleasures—he no more
Will be the chafed lion he has been! [*he goes below.*

[*The morning shines out, and the island becomes perfectly distinct.*

Albert. Beautiful island, rising out of darkness
Like a divine creation, a new day
Hath dawned upon thee, a momentous day
Never to be forgotten, which will change
Thy destiny for ever!
Hast thou sinned
That God has taken away the sacred veil
Which kept thy mountain tops concealed so long
From eye of civilized man? Oh innocent people!
The cup of knowledge now is at your lips,
And ye will drink—ay, drink, and find it poison;

For in the train of civilization comes
Sure ill, and but remote, uncertain good!

Strange is it, that my singular destiny,
Under the guide of that mysterious man,
Has led me only, of ten thousand voyagers,
To this fair island! Ah! for what intent
I know not, evil or good—but this I know,
It must be glorious—yes, it shall be glorious!
I will return in triumph to my city,
And make a splendid holiday with news
Of this fair conquest from the unknown sea!
But there they throng, the natives of the land,
Gazing in eager wonder from the heights!
[*he examines them through his glass.*
A noble race, in their unfettered beauty,
As God first made them, with their mantle folds
Descending to the knee, and massy armlets,
And chains of twisted gold, pliant as silk!
And women, too, like goddesses of old,
Or nymphs by some gloomed fountain!
Let's to land,
The sun ascends; and those cool-gladed woods
Promise delicious rest.—Let's to the shore!

SCENE III.

A beautiful rocky valley, crowned with palms, plantains, and all the rich and picturesque vegetation of tropical climates.

The CAPTAIN *and* ALBERT.

Cap. Not satisfied! Is three months' tarriance
Too little for your will?

Albert. Three little moons!
Why here one might live out an age of love,
And count it as the passing of a day!
But you, by nature cold and anti-social,
Can have no spark of sympathy with us!
Choose you a bride from these sweet islanders,
And in the lap of pleasure take your ease,
Then will I leave the island at your bidding!

Cap. Fool that you are! Mean you to tarry out
Existence in this place! Where is the glory
Of bearing to your native port the tidings
Of a new land? where is the proud ambition
That once was Albert Luberg's, to be great?
Have you ne'er thought upon a gentle maiden
That sits beside your mother all day long,
Shedding hot tears on her embroidery frame;
Waiting till she is sick at heart for tidings;
Enquiring ship-news from all voyagers;
And hoping until hope itself is dead?

If fortune, fame, ambition count as nothing;
Is love too valueless, save for a dusk
Young beauty of the woods, who is a pebble
Beside a kingly diamond, if compared
With that fair mourning girl? Oh! virtue, virtue,
Thou art a mockery; a base, gilded coin,
That men buy reputation with!

Albert. No more!
We will collect the seamen scattered now
Over the island; lay in fruits and stores
Of all this most munificent land affords;
And ere the moon, which now is in the wane,
Shall be a silver thread, hoist sail and bear
Over the waves away!

Cap. Let it be done.

[*they go forward.*

SCENE IV.

A sylvan grotto, the floor covered with rich Indian mat. Albert asleep, with his head resting on the knees of Edah, a beautiful young native, who fans him with a gorgeous plume of feathers—she sings in a low, sweet voice:

Little waves upon the deep
Murmur soft when thou dost sleep;
Gentle birds upon the tree,
Sing their sweetest songs for thee;

Cooling gales, with voices low,
In the tree-tops gently blow!
Dearest, who dost sleeping lie,
All things love thee, so do I!

When thou wak'st the sea will pour
Treasures for thee to the shore;
And the earth in plant and tree,
Bring forth fruits and flowers for thee;
And the glorious heaven above
Smile on thee like trusting love!
Dearest, who dost sleeping lie,
All things love thee, so do I!

Albert. [*opening his eyes*] 'T is a sweet song, who taught it thee, my Edah?

Edah. Love taught it me—I made it as I sang.
I ever think thus when I think of thee!
Thou art a song for ever in my soul!

Albert. My glorious Edah, thou art like a star
Which men of old did worship!

Edah. Golden stars!
The wise men of our nation call them worlds,
Where happy spirits dwell — where those that loved,
And those that have been wise and good, like thee,
Live in delight, and never die again.
I love the stars—the happy stars—dost thou?

Albert. All that is beautiful resembles thee,
And what resembles thee I love, my Edah!
But know'st thou we must part?

Edah. Why must we part?
Oh, no! thou said'st we would not part till death!

Albert. A spirit from my native land doth call—
I may not disobey it!

Edah. When called it thee?

Albert. I hear it calling ever—I must hence!

Edah. Is 't death? For on the eve my sister died
I saw a shadowy phantom, and I heard
Low voices calling—is it death thou hearest?

Albert. No, no, my beautiful! it is not death,
But it is strong as death!—In my far land
I have a mother who doth mourn for me,
And ever, ever do I hear her voice!

Edah. Oh! I would leave my mother for thy sake!
Let me go with thee!

Albert. Sweet love, that cannot be!
Far, far we go beyond the setting sun!
I cannot take thee with me. Yon dark man
That ever in the ship keeps by himself,
Is a stern chief, we dare not disobey him;
He would not let thee come on board with me!

Edah. Oh woe is me! oh woe, oh woe is me!

[*She wrings her hands in an agony of despair—Albert embraces her tenderly.*

Albert. My dearest love! my dark-eyed island beauty!
Look on me, Edah, listen to my words—
Thou art the chosen bride of a white man,
Be worthy of his love—this passionate grief
Control, as I do mine!
Edah. Thou dost not love!
Thou couldst not lay thy life down for my sake—
Oh thou art calm and cold, thou lovest not!
I cannot live if I behold thee not;—
Thou wilt live on—thou wilt love other maids,
Will break their hearts as thou hast broken mine!
Albert. Heaven is my witness, that I love thee, Edah!
Edah. My lord! my lord! swear not! didst thou not swear
Day after day, that we should never part?
Thy words are like thy love, all perfidy!
Swear not, swear not, lest the great God be angry,
And 'whelm thee in the deep.—Alas! alas!
What a great grief is mine!
[*she rushes from the grotto.*
Albert. Poor wounded heart,
Thy morning is o'erclouded—a great sorrow
Will bow thy youthful beauty to the ground,
And thou wilt curse the day whereon we met!
Kind trusting spirit, I have done thee wrong!

Albert. All that is beautiful resembles t
And what resembles thee I love, my Edal
But know'st thou we must part?

Edah. Why mus
Oh, no! thou said'st we would not part ti.

Albert. A spirit from my native land do
I may not disobey it!

Edah. When called it the

Albert. I hear it calling ever—I must h

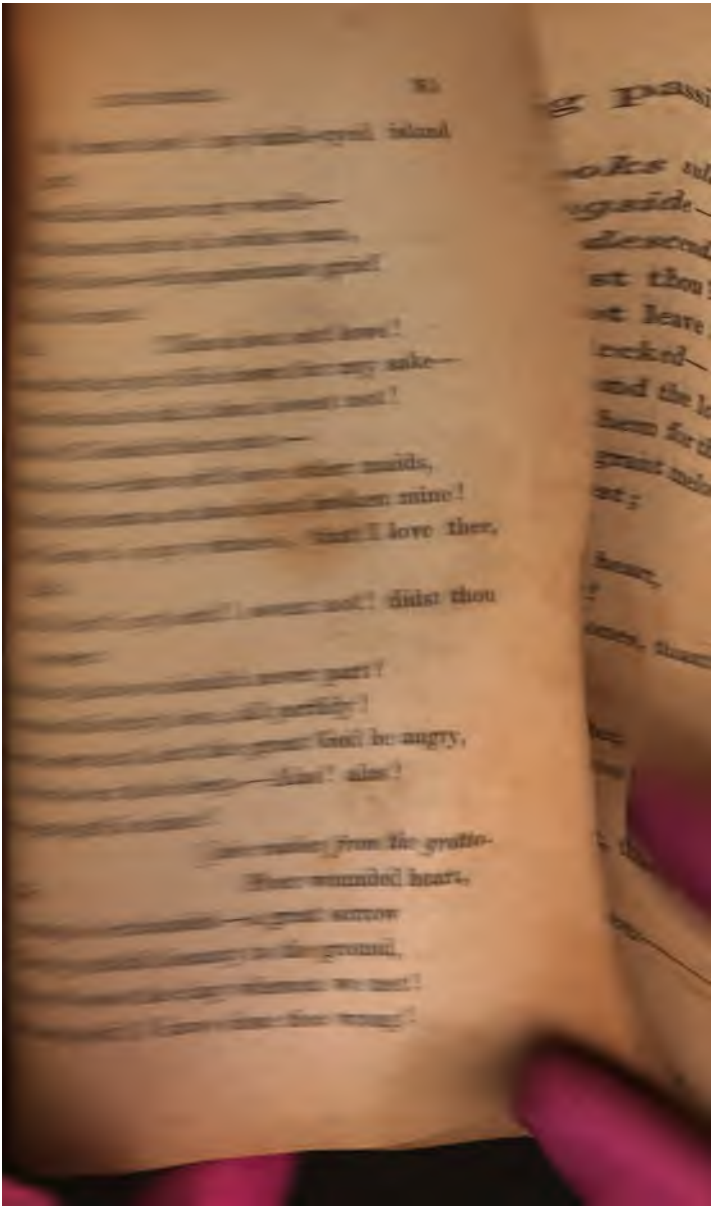
Edah. Is't death? For on the eve my
I saw a shadowy phantom, and I heard
Low voices calling—is it death thou hearest

Albert. No, no, my beautiful! it is not
But it is strong as death!—In my far land
I have a mother who doth mourn for me,
And ever, ever do I hear her voice!

Edah. Oh! I would leave my mother for
Let me go with thee!

Albert. Sweet love, that cann
Far, far we go beyond the setting sun!
I cannot take thee with me. Yon dark man
That ever in the ship keeps by himself,
Is a stern chief, we dare not disobey him;
He would not let thee come on board with m

Edah. Oh woe is me! oh woe, oh woe is
[*She wrings her hands in an a*
despair—Albert embraces her t



Will gather fruits for thee; will work bright flowers
Into a mantle for thee: I will be
More that a loving daughter to thy mother!

Albert. Thou can'st not go; but, my sweet island queen,
I will return to thee! now fare thee well!

Edah. Wilt thou, wilt thou indeed! oh then farewell
For a short season. I will watch for thee
For ever from the hills, and all night long
Keep a bright beacon burning! Oh come soon,
And bring thy mother with thee—I will love her,
Thou dost not know how I should love thy mother!

Albert. But we must part! so now my love, farewell. [*he embraces her.*

Edah. But tell me, tell me! when thou wilt come back!

Albert. Soon, soon, O very soon—farewell, farewell!

[*he springs again on deck—gives a sign, and the ship is put in motion.*

Edah. Oh take me! take me with you! for I know
He never, never will come back again!

SCENE VI.

Mid-seas — the deck of the ship — Albert and the Captain stand together, with glasses in their hands —a ship is seen in the distance, slowly making way as if heavily laden.

Albert. She is a goodly ship, well-built and large,
But in her aspect she has something strange;
She walks the glittering waters wearily;
There is an air of desolation on her;
If she were human, I should call her haggard!

Cap. [*to the seamen*]. Quick, slacken sail! we will join company!

[*he looks again through his glass.*

'T is a strange vessel, and a stranger crew!
They look like dead men risen from their graves!

Albert. [*speaking through a trumpet*]. What cheer, whence come, and whither are ye bound?
And why are ye so few, and ghastly all?

[*no answer is returned, the ship slowly takes in sail, and comes alongside.*

Albert. Oh heavens! they are like dead men!

[*Many weak voices from the ship*]. Water! water!

Cap. Speak, one of you, whence come? and what's your freight?

Man. Our cargo is of gold, and pearl, and diamond,
A kingly freight, from India; but we 're cursed;

The plague is in the ship! All, all are dead
Save we, and we are twelve! Give, give us water!
We have not had a drop for twenty hours!

Cap. [*to Albert*]. You see these men — 't were merciful to kill them,
They will go raging mad before to-morrow,
And prey on one another, like wild beasts.
And then the cargo! Think you what a freight—
Gold, pearl, and diamond!

Albert. Nay, tempt me not—
I cannot shed their blood. I am no murderer!

Cap. They 'll die; and think ye not 't were merciful
To rid them of their miserable lives?

Albert. No, let them die, as die they surely must;
We will keep near them, and when all are dead,
Possess the abandoned cargo!

Cap. As you will!

[*Albert speaks with his seamen — they crowd on sail with alacrity, and the ship begins to move.*

Sailors of the plague ship. [*with frantic gestures*].
Oh give us but one little cask of water!
For God's sake give us water!

[*The ship moves off, and the sailors of the plague-ship are heard uttering dreadful imprecations.*

SCENE VII.

Night — third night from parting with the ship — deck of Albert's vessel—watch on deck.

1*st Man.* And all to have share and share alike in the plunder—why you can't say but that is fair enough; and yet drown me, if I like the job!

2*nd Man.* Neither do I! and yet if they're dead, 't will be neither robbery nor murder, and they must be dead by this time. But somehow, it went against my conscience to leave 'em as we did: I warrant a cask o' water would n't have kept 'em alive a day longer!

1*st Man.* But th' old one said if they had water they would go raging mad, and eat one another.

2*nd Man.* I say, did you see the big fellow with the red eyes? never saw I such a sight before!

1*st Man.* Well, the fearsomest thing I saw, and the saddest, was a boy about as big as my Jack, with hands like claws, they were so wasted away, and a poor, yellow, deathly face, that set its patient lead-coloured eyes upon me, and for all the clamour, never said a word, but kept looking and looking, as if it had a meaning of its own, that I should know. Well, I 'll tell you a secret, what, said I to myself, should it want but water, so I heaved up a can of water over to him, and I shall never forget his look,

The plague i… …ly sprung a leak—
Save we, a… …e tasted not a drop
We have not … …poor fellow's mouth,
Cap. [*to* … …him—I guessed it was
mere…
They will ge… …you what, I wish we
And prey on … …ss dismal to see that
And then the… …But this is the third
Gold, pearl, … …reaks we shall come
Albert. … …ne's in.
I cannot she…
Cap. They…
mere…
To rid them … …*e strange vessel—*
Albert. N… …*and looks and making*
We will kee…
Possess the … …*and together.*
Cap. … …—how gaunt they
… …ched hands
… …
Sailors of the … …n at once,
Oh give us b… …ust be mouthed at!
For God's sak… …y councillor!
[*T*… …e means,
… …ce,
… …keep

I 'm tired of dodging them—we might as well
Be changed to greedy sharks as follow thus
These wretches day by day!
Albert. I am perplexed
Between the wish to have, and the repugnance
To shedding human blood!
Cap. Let 's spread the sail,
And leave them to the sea—them and their gold!
Albert. No, no, we 'll have the gold!
Cap. You are a man!
Gold is too good to pave the ocean with—
Throw out the grappling irons! Board the ship,
And end their miserable lives at once!

[*A horrible scene ensues — the strange crew is murdered — the ship plundered and set fire to.*

SCENE IX.

Several hours afterwards—Albert's cabin; he rushes in distractedly, throws his bloody cutlass on the floor, and flings himself upon a couch.

A SAILOR *enters hastily.*

Sailor. There is a woman on the burning ship!
Albert. Oh save her, save her! By one act o
mercy

Let us atonement make to outraged heaven!

[the sailor goes out.

Oh what a bloody wretch I am become,
The ocean would not cleanse my soul again,
Atonement never can be made to heaven!
Not even the blood of Christ could wash me clean!

[he starts up, and sees himself in a mirror.

My mother would not know me! no, no, no!
And Constance would not know me! I am lost—
The flames of hell are in my burning soul.
The gold is cursed for which I did this thing,
And I am cursed that yielded to temptation;
Give, give me drink—and let me murder thought,
As I have murdered men!

[he fills a goblet several times and drinks, then dashes the goblet to the floor.

It tastes like blood!
And wine will ever taste thus, so will water!
The bread I eat will choke me!
I am mad!
I am gone raging mad!

[he reels out of the cabin.

SCENE X.

The deck—Albert, holding a young female by the arm —Jewels and gold are scattered about.

Albert. Thou say'st thy name is Angela—well—well—
Thou shalt be now the angel of the ship!
Shalt be my queen—my little ocean-queen;
And I will deck thee in most regal fashion—
Come, thou shalt have these diamonds on thy neck!
[*he takes up a necklace.*

Angela. Keep back thy horrid arm! — Those diamonds!—
Oh, sir, they were my mother's! If thou have
A mother, I conjure thee by her love,
Have pity on me! If thou have a sister,
Think of her innocence, and wrong me not!
Oh, thou art young! — thou must — thou must have pity!

Albert. I have a mother—but she would not know me—
The savage creatures are my kindred now!
But I will love thee, Angela—will make
Thee queen o' th' sea—I 'll wed thee with this ring!
[*he attempts to put a ring on her finger.*

Angela. Away with thy unholy touch! away!
[*she springs to the prow of the vessel.*

If thou but lay thy finger on my garment,
The sea shall have a creature so polluted!
Stand off! thou shalt not drag me from this place—
Here will I die, if so the will of heaven!

Albert. [*turning aside, and pressing his hand on his forehead.*] I 'm mad! I knew I was!—this throbbing pain
Is madness!—I have done a deed of hell,
And God has cursed me for it!—Angela!
I will not do thee wrong—poor friendless child,
I will not do thee wrong! [*he staggers off the deck.*

SCENE XI.

Night—Albert's cabin, a dim lamp is burning — Albert appears asleep — a shriek is heard on deck, and a heavy plunge into the sea—Albert starts up,

Oh, gracious heaven, that is the woman's voice!
Where is she? —where am I?—Ah, I have slept—
A blood-polluted murderer, I have slept!

Enter the CAPTAIN.

Albert. What shriek was that? —and where is Angela?

Cap. Where plummet will not reach her!

Albert. Heartless wretch,—
Dost say she 's dead with such a voice as that?
If thou know'st aught of this, by all that's sacred
Thy life shall answer for 't!

Cap. My hands are clean
Of this girl's life!—But listen, and I 'll tell you—
Your drunken wooing frightened her last night!
Have your forgot how, in her desperation,
She stood, her wild hair streaming in the wind,
And her pale countenance upturned to heaven?

Albert. But she is dead!

Cap. Well, as she stood at eve
Stood she at midnight, motionless, yet muttering
A thousand quick-said prayers, with clasped hands,
Like some carved image of immortal sorrow!

Albert. Cease, thou wilt drive me mad!

Cap. The loaded sails
Dropped momently their heavy beads of dew
Upon the silent deck, meting out time
As the clock's ticking;—still she stood, like death,
The midnight dew in her black trailing hair,
And the white moon upon her whiter face!

Albert. And I the while was taking senseless sleep!

Cap. The drunken watch believed themselves alone;—
They seized her in the darkness;—from their grasp
She sprang into the waves, and sank for ever!

Albert. And thou saw'st this, and did not strike them dead! [*he rushes out.*

Cap. I 'll let them settle it as they like best.

'T was but to know if she were dead or living
That the poor men approached her!

[*he goes to an inner cabin.*

SCENE XII.

Night—tempest—thunder and lightning—the ship drives before the storm—Albert's cabin—Albert alone:

Three days the storm has raged—nor is there yet
Token of its abatement! All is done
That skill of man can do to save our lives;
The ship is lightened of her heavy lading—
That cursed freight for which we sold our souls
Has been cast overboard—yet rages still
The fury of the tempest. 'T is a sign
Of heaven's eternal punishment.—O sin,
How are thy wages death!—But God is just,
And hath no mercy on us, who had none!
The very sea hath from her jaws cast forth
The murdered dead—she has made cause against us;
Pale ghastly faces, cresting the fierce waters,
Keep in the vessel's wake as if in mockery!
And groans and cries, and curses dark as hell,
Howl in the tempest—and that woman's shriek,
And the wild protestations of the men,
Are ever in our ears! The ship is full

Of terrible phantoms that pass to and fro,
Keeping their eyes on me—they haunt *him* not—
He has no mercy, no compunction either,
And calmly sleeps as though he had not sinned—
But if *I* sleep, in dreams they drag my soul
With horrible compulsion to the pit!—
There, there they stand! I see them now around me!
Oh, fearful spectres, fasten not your eyes
On me with such a woful meaning! Hence!
Hence! ye do blast my vision like the lightning!
Stand off! stand off! ye do approach too near—
The air is hot! I have not space to breathe!

[*he rushes to the door, the Captain meets him.*

Cap. I heard your voice, you have got company?

Albert. Out of my way! — My blackest curse be on thee:
I am a damned sinner through thy means!

Cap. Peace, peace! your passion overmasters you!

Albert. Have I not need to curse thee to thy face?
Thou hast brought misery on me! I am dyed
Black in eternal shame—the fierce purgation
Of everlasting fire would cleanse me not!

Cap. Come, come, my friend, we 've had too much of raving!
Are we never to meet without these squabblings?
I 'm tired of them, and I have tidings for you—
The rain has ceased, the tempest is abating;

The moon is struggling through the broken clouds,
We shall have calm anon, and gain a harbour.

Albert. Tempest or calm is all alike to me:
Harbour I seek not—give annihilation—
An everlasting hush, and I will bless thee!

[*he goes out—the Captain follows him.*

SCENE XIII.

The vessel floating without mast or rudder—famine on board—the crew mutinous—Albert and the Captain apart from the rest—Albert sits with his head resting on his hand, and his eyes fixed as if in unconsciousness—a violent struggle is heard on the distant part of the deck, and a body falls.

[*Albert.* What miserable sound of mortal strife
Was that I heard e'en now?

Cap. Two famished wretches
Strove for a mouse, and one hath killed the other—
And now they fight like tigers for the body!

Albert. Oh, horrible! Vengeance is with us now!
What further consummation can there be?

[*he advances along the deck with difficulty; the seamen are eagerly stripping the body.*

Albert. My brethren in affliction, sin not thus;
Touch not that flesh, lest God abandon you!

Mate. There is no bread!—there is no drop of water!
These cannot speak for thirst—nor shall I long—
If you have water, give it us!
Albert. Alas!
I have it not—I shared the last with you!
Mate. Then let us have the boat, and save ourselves;—
Some land is near, for many flights of birds
Have passed us since the morning.
Albert. [*aside*] Still that prayer!
If they reach any shore, I am undone!
But 't is impossible!—their feeble arms
Could not sustain the oars—and without compass
They cannot gain the land—I 'm safe from them!
[*aloud*] Well, take the boat—ye can but die at last!

[*the boat is launched in silence, and with difficulty—they throw in their blankets, and all take their seats except the mate.*

Mate. Now, sir, we want a compass—there are two
Down in the cabin.
Albert. There is only one,
And that ye shall not have!
Mate. Then be our blood
Upon your head—and may the fiend keep with you!

[*they row off in silence.*

SCENE XIV.

Albert's city—two merchant's on 'Change.

1*st Mer.* I've seen the men myself, and heard their story,
In number they are seven—a ghastly crew,
Like walking corpses from a charnel-house;
Their lips were black and shrivelled, and their jaws
Hung like the stiffened jaws of a dead face.
For thirteen days they had not tasted food;
They now are lodged within the hospital;
And I have heard their dreadful history,
More horrible than their condition!

2*nd Mer.* How?
Be quick, and tell us how?

1*st Mer.* It doth involve
The credit of a well esteemed house:
They are the remnant of a crew that sailed
With Albert Luberg, on that fatal night
When, by a sudden tempest wrecked, his ship
Went down without the harbour. On that night,
As you perhaps have heard, for it was talked of,
He joined himself unto a foreign captain,
And sailed, no one knew whither.

2*nd Mer.* And what then?

1*st Mer.* This captain was a pirate, and these men
Tell such a horrible story of their deeds
As makes the blood run cold!

2nd Mer. But Albert Luberg
Could not turn pirate! 'T is a base assertion!
These fellows have been mutinous, and now
Would blast the honour of a worthy man;
They are a lying crew—I 'll not believe it!

1st Mer. Nay, hear the men yourself! You 'll not detect
The semblance of a lie—'t is a calm story;
Made, by their separate testimony, sure.
But here comes one whom I did leave with them,
Ask him, and he will tell you this, and more.

3rd Mer. [*coming up*] Well sir, I 've heard this doleful story through,
And fresh particulars which you heard not.
It is a fearful tale; and yet is full
Of a most wholesome lesson, which will preach
Unto the sinner that the arm of God
Is still stretched out to punish, let him strive
Against it as he will—for this poor wretch,
Though he refused a compass to these men,
That they might reach no shore to implicate him,
Shall find his cruel wisdom ineffectual,
For they were guided by the arm of God
Over the pathless waters, to this port,
That so his infamy might be perfected!
For them the sea grew calm—and a strong gale
Impelled them ever forward without oars,

Which they were all unfit to ply—their sail
A tattered blanket!

2nd Mer. Ah, my heart doth ache
To think of his poor mother, that good lady
Who ever lived in blameless reputation!
And then her niece, the gentle, orphaned Constance!

1st Mer. I know they had misgivings—for his mother
Took to her bed in grief for his departure,
And Constance hath shunned company since then.

2nd Mer. Alas, 't will break their hearts, they loved him so!

4th Mer. [*coming up*] I would consult you on this dreadful business
Of Albert Luberg—Were it not most right
To send a vessel out to meet with him?
He cannot be far distant, for these men
Came hither in five days in their poor boat!

3rd Mer. If he were in another hemisphere
It were but right to follow him, for justice!

1st Mer. And is not the great will of God revealed
In the miraculous saving of these men?

4th Mer. We are agreed then! Let us find a ship
Fit for this service, lightly built and swift,
Which may pursue him round the world itself.

1st and 3rd Mer. 'T is a right judgment!

2nd Mer. Ah, poor Madame Luberg!

[*they all go off together.*

SCENE XV.

Street—a crowd assembled.

1*st Man.* He was brought in this morning.

2*nd Man.* Did you see him!

1*st Man.* No, but I saw the wreck he was taken from—nothing but a black, weather-beaten hull; it lay like an old boat on the water, you would have said it would go to pieces with every wave, and yet the timbers were all sound—they say it had not sprung a leak, nor would have perished for months.

3*rd Man.* And have they got them both?

1*st Man.* Only Luberg; the other got off, nobody knows how,—they say he is the devil!

2*nd Man.* Lord have mercy on us!

[*the crowd increases.*

4*th Man.* Well, I 've seen him—and I wish I had never set eyes on him! Oh, he 's a bad man! he has a horrid look—and I remember him a proper young man, and the handsomest that went out of harbour!

5*th Man.* But he was dying of hunger when they picked him from the wreck—they say a child would outweigh him! poor fellow!

6*th Man.* Do you pity him, a bloody pirate!

5*th Man.* Oh but you hav n't seen his face :

have! He is like a withered old man, and has such a look of misery! God help him!

1st Man. And what's to be done with him?

6th Man. They say he will be hung in irons on the wreck, and then all will be sunk together!

7th Man. 'T is no more than he deserves!

5th Man. If all had their deserts, who would escape the gallows?

3rd Man. Let's go look at the wreck.

Several. Let's go! [*they disperse.*

SCENE XVI.

A small, dark cell in a prison—Albert heavily ironed, is seated upon straw; he is haggard and wild in appearance, with his eyes cast down as if stupified. The door slowly opens, and Constance in deep mourning, enters; she seats herself on a bench near him, looks on him in silence and weeps; Albert slowly raises his head, and gazes at her for some time before he appears to recognize her.

Albert. I dare not speak the name, but is it thou?

Cons. Oh Albert, Albert!

Albert. Canst thou speak my name? Do ye not curse me, thou and my poor mother?

[*he bows his head to his knees, and weeps bitterly.*

Cons. [*kneeling beside him*] Oh God! who art a father to the afflicted,
Who art a fount of Mercy—look on him!
Pity and pardon him, and give him peace.
Oh Christ! who in thine hour of mighty woe,
Didst comfort the poor thief upon the cross,
Bless the bowed sinner in his prison-house!

Albert. Thou angel of sweet mercy! woe is me!
Sorrow hath left its trace upon thy cheek—
I am a cursed spoiler, who was born
To wring the hearts that loved me!—oh my mother!
My gracious mother! is she changed as thou?

Cons. Thy mother! ask not, Albert, of thy mother.

Albert. Ah, she does not forgive me! nor will God!

Cons. Albert, thy mother's dead—and her last words
Were prayers for thee!

Albert. Then I have killed my mother!
Oh blood! blood, blood! will my poor soul be never
Freed from the curse of blood!

Cons. [*taking his hand*] Albert, be calm,
'T was by the will of God, that that dear saint
Went to her blessed rest—I mourn her not—
I do rejoice in her eternal peace!

Albert. [*looking on the hand of Constance*] I dare not press it to my longing lips—

There is pollution on them—they have sworn
False oaths—they have by cruel, flattering lies,
Lured to destruction one as true as thou!
There is a gentle, a meek-hearted maiden
Burning her nightly beacon of sweet woods
Upon the peak of a fair, palmy isle,
To guide me o'er the waters! long ere this
She must have pined, and pined—and she will die
Heart-broken! Constance, do not look on me—
For thou wilt curse me, hate me, spurn me from thee.
I am a monster, dost thou fear me not?
Have they not told thee of my cruel sins?

Cons. Albert, I fear thee not—I mourn for thee.
I knew that thou hadst sinned, but I forgave thee!
May God forgive thee, and support that maiden!

Albert. Thou art not woman, Constance, thou art angel!
Ah, there were days when we two sate together,
Glad, innocent spirits; when from the same prayer-book
We made the same responses, and our eyes
Traversed the page together, save when mine
Glanced from the book upon thy gentle cheek,
And watched it crimson, conscious of my gaze!
Ah, I was guiltless then! and then my mother
Gave me the holy book to read to her,
Eve after eve.—Oh then I loved that book,

And holy things—then heaven seemed just before me,
Death an immeasurable distance off!
Now death stares in my face—a horrid death!
And heaven—oh, I am damned! I have no hope!

Cons. Say not, dear Albert, that thou hast no hope!

Albert. I have no hope—I tell thee, I have none!
It were abusing mercy to extend it
To such a wretch as I!

Cons. But cry to God
For pardon, for repentance, he will hear thee!

Albert. I cannot pray—my tongue has cursed so long
I have forgot the words men use in prayer!

Cons. Dear Albert, now I fear thee—thou art frantic! [*she rises.*

Albert. Nay, leave me not! Oh do not, do not leave me!
When we part here, we ne'er shall meet again—
That great impassable gulf will lie between us!

Cons. Oh Albert, promise me to pray to God—
Christ died, thou know'st, for sinners!

Albert. My good angel,
Would that my judge were pitiful as thou!

[*a rattling of keys is heard outside the door, it opens, and the gaoler enters.*

Gao. The chaplain is without, and he would pray
Yet once more with the prisoner.

The CHAPLAIN *enters.*

Cons. to Albert. Now, now farewell!
And may Almighty God look down and bless thee!

Albert. [*wildly*] Farewell, farewell! we shall meet never more!
It is a farewell for eternity!

[*Constance, overcome by her feelings, is supported out by the chaplain.*

Achzib made his escape from the pirate-ship in some way which eluded all detection. He did not, however, think it expedient to enter again the sea-port; and as all places were alike to him, with this exception, he resigned himself to chance, and took up his abode in the first considerable city he came to. He was so extravagantly elated with his success, that he carried himself with so self-satisfied an air as to attract the notice of every one. Some said he was newly come into possession of a great fortune, and that money, and the importance it gained for him, were so novel as to have turned his head; some said he was the little-great man of a small town, where his consequential airs were mistaken for marks of real greatness;—others said he was a travelling doctor, who had just taken out a new patent;—while others took him for a marvellously wise philosopher, who, thinking of any thing rather than him-

self, had acquired this ridiculous carriage in sheer absence of mind;—and others again, supposed him to be a poet, inflated with the success of a new poem.

Achzib, in the meantime, thinking he had done enough for the present, determined to have an interval of rest. He accordingly took a large house, furnished it sumptuously, and began in reality to be looked upon as somebody. He did not, it is true, hold much intercourse with the citizens, though he was a most munificent patron of boxers, wrestlers, and all kind of prize-fighters and gamblers. He occasionally went on 'Change too, and circulated now and then some spurious lie or other; which, deranging all money business, while it made the fortunes of a few, was the ruin of many. He had considerable dealings also with the usurers; and keeping a pack of hounds and a noble stud of horses, found occupation enough both for day and night. To diversify his employments he dabbled in judicial astrology, and the favourite pursuits of the old alchemists. He repeatedly asserted that he had mixed the Elixir Vitæ, and also that he could compound the Philosopher's-stone. They who heard this, had an easy way of accounting for the money that he appeared always to have at command; but he himself well knew that every stiver was drawn from the bags of

the usurer, though never destined to find their way back again.

The life Achzib led, was much to his mind; he told lies with the most truthful face in the world, and cheated in so gentlemanly a style, that he might perhaps have maintained this life much longer, had he not been accidentally tempted to his fourth trial.

He was on the Prada, or place of public resort, and seeing two grave persons in deep discourse together, and who seemed unconscious of all that surrounded them, he took a seat near, hoping to hear some secret worth knowing or telling. Their conversation, however, was entirely of a moral or religious nature; and Achzib would soon have been weary of it, had they not branched off to the subject of temptation, and the habits of mind which render a man peculiarly assailable by it.

"For instance," said the one, "old age, if beset by temptation, could but inadequately resist it, for the mind becomes enfeebled with the body. Youth may be inexperienced and volatile; middle age engrossed by the world and its pursuits; but is it not the noble enthusiasm of the one, and the severe uprightness of the other which makes them often superior to their trials; and which of these does the weakness and despondency of old age possess?"

"But," rejoined the other, "the passions have

ceased to stimulate in old age. Ambition, love, or avarice, are the temptations of earlier life. Men do not become suddenly vicious in old age, for the habits of mind and body in men become part and parcel of themselves; and, if through life these have been regulated by principle, I say not religion, they will preserve age, if it were assailed by temptation, as effectually as the higher motives of more vigorous life."

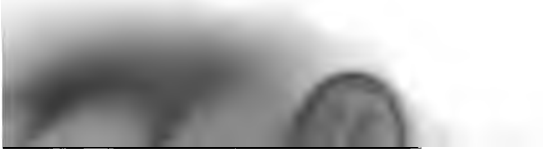
"True," replied the first speaker, "if the trial came only through the medium of the passions; but though a man may have arrived at old age unpolluted by outward sins, yet the temper of his mind may be the very opposite of virtue. He may doubt the goodness of God, though his life has been one series of mercies; he may be obstinately uncheered by his love, and unawakened by his daily Providence. A murmuring, morbid doubting of God's goodness is the peculiar weakness of such a mind—and the human being who can have passed through life, and at last retains such a spirit, is neither guiltless of sin, nor unassailable by temptation."

"But such a case," replied the other, "is extremely rare. Old age finds a natural aliment in religion; and as its ties to the earth are sundered, the very necessities of its nature unite it more closely with heaven."

"Such a case," persisted his friend, "may be rare, but alas, it is not beyond the range of human experience; and the peculiar prayer of such a spirit should be, 'lead me not into temptation!'"

"Oh, but," exclaimed the other, with holy enthusiasm, "God, who is boundless and long-suffering in mercy, and who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, will keep such feeble spirit from trial beyond his strength; or in his loving-kindness will extend the hand of his mercy to save him, even as the sinking apostle was sustained when his faith failed him upon the waters!"

Achzib rose up before the conclusion of this last observation; taking great praise to himself that wise men, such as he, gathered up their advantage from even the casual conversation of two strangers.



THE OLD MAN.

THE OLD MAN.

PERSONS.

OLD MAN.
MARGARET, HIS DAUGHTER.
UGOLIN, THE SUITOR OF MARGARET.
ACHZIB, A STRANGER.

SCENE I.

A small house just without the gate of the city — an old and much enfeebled paralytic, sitting by his door in the sun.

Old Man. Supported by Eternal Truth,
Nature is in perpetual youth;
As at the first, her flowers unfold,
And her fruits ripen in the sun,
And the rich year its course doth run;
For nature never groweth old!
A thousand generations back
Yon glorious sun looked not more bright,
Nor kept the moon her silent track
More truly through the realms of night!
Oh, nature never groweth old,
The Eternal arm doth her uphold!

She droopeth not, doth not decay;
Is beautiful as on the day
When the strong morning-stars poured out
  Their hymn of triumph at the birth,
  Of the young, undeclining earth,
And all the sons of God did shout
In their immortal joy to see
It bound into immensity!
But man, for whom the earth was made,
A feeble worm, doth droop and fade!
Those fleecy clouds, like hills of heaven,
To them is constant beauty given;
This little flower which at my feet
Springs up, is beautiful and sweet—
A thousand years, and this poor flower
Will be the same as at this hour!
But man, who as a lord is placed
  Amid creation, what is he?
A thing whose beauty is defaced
  By age, by toil, by misery!
Wherefore that proud intelligence;
That discontented, reasoning sense
Which keeps him restless, and doth send
  His struggling thought through depth and height;
Which makes him strive to comprehend
  The Eternal and the Infinite?

Wherefore this immaterial being
  Which with the body is at strife;
  This powerful pulse of inward life,
Which ever feeling, hearing, seeing,
  Finds nothing that can satisfy?
Better methinks, the eagle's wing,
Which bears it where its soul would spring,
  Up to the illimitable sky!
Better the desert-creature's might,
That makes its life a strong delight,
Than this unquiet bosom-guest
That fills man's being with unrest!
Time was, my life was bright as theirs;
  Time was, my spirit had no cloud—
  But age the buoyant frame has bowed,
And gloomed my soul with many cares!
Oh youth, how I look back to thee,
  As to an Eden I have lost;
Thy beauty ever haunteth me
  As an unquiet, lovely ghost,
Which in my arms I would enfold,
But thou elud'st my feeble hold!
But hark! my daughter singeth now!
  Sweet words are ever on her tongue,
And a glad kindness lights her brow:
  No wonder is it, she is young!

[*the sound of a wheel is heard within, and a voice singing:*

There is a land where beauty cannot fade,
Nor sorrow dim the eye;
Where true-love shall not droop nor be dismayed,
And none shall ever die!
Where is that land, oh where?
For I would hasten there!
Tell me,—I fain would go,
For I am wearied with a heavy woe!
The beautiful have left me all alone;
The true, the tender, from my path are gone!
Oh guide me with thy hand,
If thou dost know that land,
For I am burthened with oppressive care,
And I am weak and fearful with despair!
Where is it? tell me where?
Thou that art kind and gentle, tell me where?

Friend, thou must trust in Him who trod before
The desolate paths of life;
Must bear in meekness as he meekly bore
Sorrow, and pain, and strife!
Think how the son of God
These thorny paths hath trod;
Think how he longed to go,
Yet tarried out for thee the appointed woe:
Think of his weariness in places dim,
When no man comforted nor cared for him!

Think of the blood-like sweat
With which his brow was wet,
Yet how he prayed, unaided and alone,
In that great agony, "Thy will be done!"
Friend, do not thou despair,
Christ from his heaven of heavens will hear thy prayer!

Old Man. My daughter, thou hast brought me back,
For I have erred; my soul is weak,
It ever leaves the righteous track,
Some dangerous, darker path to seek!
God pardon me if I have sinned!
But my impatient soul doth long
To leave this weary flesh behind,
And be once more the young, the strong!
And when I see, untired, unspent,
How nature keeps her loveliness,
Like some strong life omnipotent,
I do abhor my feebleness;
And marvel whence it is man's frame,
That shrines a spirit strong and bold,
Which hath a proud, immortal aim,
Becomes so bowed and feebly old;
Why he keeps not his manhood's strength
Maturely stately, filled with grace,
And rich in knowledge, till at length
He goes to his appointed place;

Can God delight or beauty see
In age's dark infirmity?
Take, take me hence! I am grown weary!
Life is a prison, dark and dreary!
Oh that my soul could soar away
Up to the imperishable day,
And drink at ever-living rills,
And cast behind this weary clay,
This life of never-ending ills!

But who comes here? I know him not,
Or if I did, I have forgot;
My senses are so feeble grown,
I know not now whom I have known!

Enter a STRANGER.

Strang. Friend, I would take a seat by you awhile,
I 'm weary with the travel of to-day.

Old Man. What, are you weary with the journeying
Of one short day! Are you not hale and strong?
Methinks you scarcely are past middle life—
When I was *your* age, I was never weary!

Strang. I do believe you, friend: I can see traces
Of vigour that has been; and I have heard
Of your herculean strength, long years ago.

Old Man. Ay sir, I have been young, but now am old!

Strang. There was no wrestler like you, no strong swimmer
Could breast the billows with you; you could run
Up to the mountain summit like the goat,
Bounding from crag to crag—you followed then
The shepherd's healthful calling, and were known
Both near and far, as a bold mountaineer.

Old Man. You had not knowledge of me in my youth?

Strang. No, but I oft have heard you spoken of,
As so excelling in athletic sports
Men made a proverb of you; afterward,
You served your country in its bloody wars,
And seconding your valour by your arm,
Did miracles of bravery.

Old Man. All is over!
Old age has crippled me. I am sunk down
Into the feeble, wretched thing you see!
Why was I not cut down in that strong prime?
I loathe this weary wasting, day by day—
I am a load on others as myself!

Strang. Age, my good friend, is dark, dark and unlovely:
'T is no new truth discovered yesterday!

Old Man. I see the young men glorying in their strength;

I see the maidens in their graceful beauty,
And my soul dies within me at the thought
That they must fade, and wither, and bow down,
Like me, beneath the burthen of old age!

Strang. It is a gloomy lot that man is born to!
God deals not kindly in afflicting thus;
There can be no equivalent for age;
Would not the monarch, stricken by the weight
Of four-score years and their infirmities,
Buy youth from the poor peasant at the price
Of twenty kingdoms? Life should have been given
Methinks, exempt from miserable decay;
Enough that we must lay it down at last.—
But you are silent, friend! Have I not struck
Into the very current of your thoughts?

Old Man. I know not if such thoughts be wise and good; —
My flesh is weak, and doth so warp my spirit,
That I have murmured thus;—but God is wise!
I know that he afflicts us for our good.
And this I know, that my Redeemer liveth;
And though the worm this body shall devour,
Mine eyes shall yet behold Him when this mortal
Shall have put on its immortality!
Lord, I believe—help thou mine unbelief!

Strang. Why, what an inconsistency is man!
This moment you were murmuring—now you take
Another kind of language, altogether!

Old Man. I told you I was weak! I do abhor
Old age, which so enfeebles and chains down
My spirit to this miserable matter.
But I doubt not that God is strong to save;
And if I keep my trust in him unbroken,
He, after death, will crown me as a star,
With an imperishable youth and glory!
But I am weak, and age doth wake in me
A spirit of impatience which is sin!

Strang. This fearful spirit of despondency
Which whispers "this is sin,—and this—and this!"
Is part of the infirmity of age;
Does not the young man, vigorous in his body,
Think, speak, and act without such qualms of fear?
You, in the free exuberance of youth
Went on rejoicing, like a creature filled
With immortality of strength and beauty;
But as the body, so the spirit weakens,
And thus becomes a feeble, timid thing!

Old Man. I know it!—I have known it all too long!

Strang. Seven years you've been in this most sad condition——

Old Man. I have—and I was threescore years and ten
When this infirmity first fell upon me.

Strang. It is a great age, seventy years and seven;
And seven years more you may remain on earth!

Old Man. Oh, Heaven forbid, that I for seven years more.
Should drag on this poor body!—yet my life
Is crowned with mercies still!

Strang. How so, my friend?
I did suppose you had no mercies left,
I thought that they and youth all went together.

Old Man. I have a child,—the child of my old age.
My sons went to the dust in their bright youth—
Daughters I had—but they too were, and are not!
But God was pleased to spare unto my age
This youngest born—this dutiful, dear child,
Who doth so tend my miserable decay,
Winning a decent livelihood by toil!

Strang. I 've seen her, she is fair to look upon:
'T is much she hath not left you for a husband!

Old Man. Oh, you know not my daughter to speak thus!
Is she not dutiful?—She hath put off
Year after year, the day of her espousals,
That she might tend on my decrepitude!

Strang. I do bethink me now—she is betrothed
To the young pastor of a mountain people;
I 've heard it spoken of—I 've seen him too;
He is a pale and melancholy man,

Who reads his Bible, and makes gloomy hymns—
Your daughter often sings them to her wheel.

Old Man. Ah, me! his crossed affection clouds his spirit,
And doth impair his health, not over strong!
And thus I know that while my life endures
I must divide two loving, tender hearts!
But if you heard him pouring forth his faith,
His happy, Christian faith, in burning words,
And saw his cheerful life, you would not say
He was a melancholy man!

Strang. Well, well,
I do not doubt the man is good and kind,
And in your presence wears a happy face.
But I have seen him in his mountain-valley,
When the dark fit is on him, sad enough!

Old Man. God help me! I have sundered them too long!

Strang. True, it must ever wound a generous nature
To know it is a bar to other's bliss!—
But see, the evening cometh down apace,
I must depart—but if you will permit me,
Since I have business which within the city
Will keep me for a season, I will come
And have some profitable talk with you;
For with old age is wisdom—and instruction
With length of days;—thus said the wise of yore

Old Man. Come you, and welcome;—I but rarely see
The face of any one, for few prefer
The converse of the old—they say forsooth,
His faculties are darkened with his years;
What boots it talking to so old a man!

Strang. Good night, my venerable friend,—be sure
I hold it as a privilege to talk
With an experienced, ancient man like you.

[*he goes.*

Old Man. A proper cordial spirit! a prime spirit!
He must have aged parents whom he serves
With dutiful respect, and my grey hairs
Are reverenced for their sakes! So was youth taught
When I was young; we scoffed not at the old,
Nor held them drivellers, as youth does now;
This generation is corrupt, and lax
In good morality;—saving my daughter
And Ugolin, none reverence my years.
Alas, the thought of them brings bitter pangs
Across my soul!—This man knows Ugolin,
And saith he has his melancholy hours—
Perchance my cheerful daughter has hers too!—
Too long I 've sundered them, for that they mourn:
What do I know but 'neath this shew of duty
They wish me dead!—Ah, no! it is not so;
Shame on myself for harbouring such a thought!

MARGARET *comes out.*

Marg. Father, the sun is sinking 'neath the boughs
Of yonder lime—and see, the gilded dome
Within the city now is lighted up;—
'T is late, my father, and the evening air
Will chill thy frame! — Give me thy hand, dear father,
And lean on me, I will support thee in.

Old Man. Nay, 't is not chill! these summer eves are warm;
Let me enjoy the sun while yet I can.
Thou 'rt young—thou 'lt live to feel it many years—
Sit down beside me, child!

Marg. Thou hadst a guest
Holding long converse with thee. I was glad,
For there is little to divert thy thoughts
In this dull place—no horsemen pass this way;
And since the road was cut beneath the mountain,
But rarely a foot-traveller. Whence came he?
Was he some scholar travelling in these parts—
Or came he from the city?

Old Man. I scarce know;
Something he said of dwelling in the city,
But what, I have forgot; my memory fails me,
I am a weak old man! But sing to me
Some comfortable hymn—I ever loved
Music at sunset in my better days.

Margaret sings——

Oh Lord! before thy glorious face
My human soul I will abase;
  Nor pride myself because I know
The wonders of the earth and skies!
When the stars set, and when they rise;
  And when the little flower doth blow,
  And seasons come and go!

Oh, how can man himself present
Before thee, the Omnipotent,
  The Omnipresent Deity,
And not abhor the daring pride
Which his poor soul had magnified;
  And not shrink back, appalled to see
  How far he is from thee!

Yet, Source of love, and life and light,
The one existence—Infinite!
  Thou dost regard thy creature man;
With mercies dost enrich his lot!
Hast blessed him though he knew it not,
  From the first hour his life began,
  To its remotest span!

Oh God! I will not praise thee most
For that which makes man's proudest boast—
Power, grandeur, or unshackled will—
But to thy goodness will I raise
My most triumphant song of praise,
And cast myself in every ill
Upon thy mercy still!

Old Man. 'T is a sweet hymn, a comfortable hymn!
My daughter, God is good, though man is weak,
And doubteth of his providence!
Marg. He is—
He is a God of mercy more than judgment!—
But hark! those are the sounds of eventide;
The booming of the beetle, and the cry,
Shrill as a reed-pipe, of the little bat;
And the low city-hum, like swarming bees;
And the small water-fall, I hear them now:
These mark the closing eve: now come within,
I have your supper ready, and will read
To you awhile in some religious book.
Old Man. Well, well—I am but like the ancient servant
Of our good Lord, I do put forth my hand
And others gird and lead me where I would not!

[*they go in.*

SCENE II.

Night-fall—a room in the cottage. In the far part, the old Man's bed, with the curtains drawn round it. —Margaret sits within a screen at her work; a small lamp is burning beside her.

Marg. I'll sing a hymn, it oft hath cheered his spirit
In its disquietude—Oh Lord forgive him,
If he say aught injurious of thy mercy—
He is a weak, old man! [*she sings.*

Bowed 'neath the load of human ill,
Our spirits droop, and are dismayed;
Oh Thou, that saidest 'peace, be still,'
To the wild sea, and wast obeyed,
Speak comfortable words of peace,
And bid the spirit's tumult cease!

We ask not length of days, nor ease,
Nor gold; but, for thy mercy's sake,
Give us thy joy, surpassing these,
Which the world gives not, nor can take;
And count it not for sin that we
At times despond, or turn from thee!

Enter UGOLIN, *softly.*

Ugo. How is thy father, Margaret? does he sleep?

Marg. Methinks he does; I have not heard him move
For half an hour.

Ugo. Thou lookest sad, my love,
Hast thought my tarriance long? I would have sped
To thee ere sunset, but I stayed to comfort
A mother in affliction; a poor neighbour;
Wife of the fisherman, whose son hath fallen
Into the lake, and was brought home a corpse!
A worthy son, the comfort of the house.

Marg. Alas, poor soul! it is a great affliction!
Ah Ugolin, this is a world of sorrow,
And, saving for the hope the Christian bears
In his dear faith, a dark and joyless world!

Ugo. It is not oft thy spirit is o'ercast—
I see thee ever as a gentle star,
Shedding kind, cheering influence!

Marg. Of late
My spirit hath grown sadder, and I ponder
Upon the many ills which flesh is heir to;
Sickness and death—the falling off of friends;
Blightings of hope; and of the desolation
Sin brings upon the heart as on the home—
And hearing now of this poor woman's grief,
And of her brave boy's death, my soul is saddened;
Besides, my father's mood doth frighten me;
Heaven grant his soul's impatience be not sin!

He almost curses life, so does he long
To pass away in death, which he conceives
The portal of immortal youth and joy.
Never did aged man abhor his years
Like my poor father! 'T is, I must believe,
Only the weakness of a feeble spirit,
Bowed down beneath his threescore years and ten!

Ugo. Margaret, thou hast performed a daughter's part;

I did allow thy father's claim to thee,—
Now list to mine. Do thou make him *my* father,
And let him dwell with us; we 'll comfort him—
Our bliss will reconcile him to his life!

Marg. Alas, thou know'st he will not leave this roof!

Sorrow and love have bound him to these walls;
He'd die if we remove him; and thy duties,
As the good pastor of a worthy flock,
Bind thee unto thy mountains! Ugolin,
Could I believe this weary waiting for me—
This seven years' tarriance on a daughter's duty,
Fretted thee with impatience, I would yield
Thee back thy faith, and give thee liberty
To choose elsewhere; but I have known thee well,
Have known thy constancy, thy acquiescence
With the great will of God, howe'er unpleasing
To our poor souls; so let us still perform

Our separate duties! When my father needs
My care no longer, 't will be a great joy
To have performed my duty unto him;
And all the good, life has in store for us,
Will come with tenfold blessing!

Ugo. Dearest love,
I thank thee for the justice thou hast done me—
But let me have my will, and to thy father
Speak once more on this point! If he refuse,
As he before has done, I 'll say no more!

Old Man. Margaret! my daughter Margaret!

Marg. [*drawing aside the curtains*] Yes, dear father,
What dost thou need?

Old Man. I thought I heard him speak,
Is he still here?

Marg. He is, shall he come to thee?

Old Man. No, no,—I tell thee no! dear daughter no!
I saw him in my dream, and when I woke
I heard him speak with thee: let him go hence!

Marg. Dear father, thou art dreaming still, be sure!
Thou art not speaking of good Ugolin—
It was his voice thou heard'st!

Old Man. Good Ugolin!
Ay, ay, perchance it might be Ugolin!

I was in dreams—I thought it was the man
Who did converse with me beside the door;
It was a dream—a strange, unpleasing dream.
But go, my child,—it only was a dream,
For rarely dost thou see poor Ugolin;
Yet ere thou go, smoothen my pillow for me!

[*Margaret adjusts the pillow, and draws the curtains.*

Ugo. Thy father is not well, dear Margaret,
His sleep is sore disturbed.

Marg. 'T was but a dream;
There came a stranger and conversed with him
An hour ere sunset, and he sees so rarely
The face of man, that it becomes a terror
To him in sleep; besides, his mind was burthened
Before he went to rest. [*a bell tolls the hour.*

Ugo. The time wears on;—
I must not tarry longer, or the hour
Will be past midnight ere I reach my home.
I will be here to-morrow ere the sun set.
Sweet rest to thee, my Margaret, and good dreams,
And to the poor old man! [*he embraces her.*

Marg. Farewell, good Ugolin! [*he goes out.*

[*Margaret fastens the door; then, after listening a few minutes by her father's bed, she retires to her own chamber.*

SCENE III.

Noon of the next day—the saloon of a house in the city, opening to a green on which young men are engaged in athletic sports—the old Man sits in a large chair looking on; the Stranger stands beside him.

Strang. Nay, nay, you know it was with your consent
I brought you here. The litter was so easy,
The day so warm, the gale so soft and low,
You did yourself confess the journey pleasant;
Confessed that a new life refreshed your limbs;
Yet now you murmur, and uneasy thoughts
Disquiet you!

Old Man. When the poor flesh is weak,
So is the spirit.

Strang. True, my ancient friend!
But let us now regard the youths before us;
Behold their manly forms, their graceful limbs,
Supple, yet full of force Herculean.
Look at their short, curled hair; their features' play;
Their well-set, noble heads; their shoulders broad;
Their well-compacted frames, that so unite
Beauty and strength together! Such is youth.

Old Man. I once was such as they.

Strang. Look at that boy,

Old Man. Come you, and welcome;—I but rarely see
The face of any one, for few prefer
The converse of the old—they say forsooth,
His faculties are darkened with his years;
What boots it talking to so old a man!

Strang. Good night, my venerable friend,—be sure
I hold it as a privilege to talk
With an experienced, ancient man like you.

[*he goes.*

Old Man. A proper cordial spirit! a prime spirit!
He must have aged parents whom he serves
With dutiful respect, and my grey hairs
Are reverenced for their sakes! So was youth taught
When I was young; we scoffed not at the old,
Nor held them drivellers, as youth does now;
This generation is corrupt, and lax
In good morality;—saving my daughter
And Ugolin, none reverence my years.
Alas, the thought of them brings bitter pangs
Across my soul!—This man knows Ugolin,
And saith he has his melancholy hours—
Perchance my cheerful daughter has hers too!—
Too long I 've sundered them, for that they mourn:
What do I know but 'neath this shew of duty
They wish me dead!—Ah, no! it is not so;
Shame on myself for harbouring such a thought!

MARGARET *comes out.*

Marg. Father, the sun is sinking 'neath the boughs
Of yonder lime—and see, the gilded dome
Within the city now is lighted up;—
'T is late, my father, and the evening air
Will chill thy frame! — Give me thy hand, dear father,
And lean on me, I will support thee in.

Old Man. Nay, 't is not chill! these summer eves are warm;
Let me enjoy the sun while yet I can.
Thou 'rt young—thou 'lt live to feel it many years—
Sit down beside me, child!

Marg. Thou hadst a guest
Holding long converse with thee. I was glad,
For there is little to divert thy thoughts
In this dull place—no horsemen pass this way;
And since the road was cut beneath the mountain,
But rarely a foot-traveller. Whence came he?
Was he some scholar travelling in these parts—
Or came he from the city?

Old Man. I scarce know;
Something he said of dwelling in the city,
But what, I have forgot; my memory fails me,
I am a weak old man! But sing to me
Some comfortable hymn—I ever loved
Music at sunset in my better days.

Strang. What, to be such as these, an evil thing!
Did they not laugh at thee, and mock thine age?

Old Man. Ay, what is youth but folly? Now I see
The sinfulness of my unholy wishes:
I thank thee, God, that thou hast kept my soul
From this great snare! Oh, take me, take me hence,
A feeble man, I am not of your sort!

Strang. [*aside*] A curse upon thee, and thy feebleness. [*he speaks to four of the young men.*
My friend, the litter will be here anon;
These will conduct thee safely to thy daughter:
Give me thy hand, old friend, I fain would serve thee.

Old Man. Let me go home: I am a weak old man.
[*the four youths accompany him out.*

Strang. A weak old man! a weak old whining fool!
If pain and hunger could have made him mine,
He should not thus have left me; but I know
The soul is only strengthened by oppression.
I still will speak him fair—will flatter him,
And stir up that impatient soul of his,
Till his own act shall make him mine for ever.
Now let him rest awhile, and bask i' the sun,
Like other feeble things; for yet seven days
I 'll leave him to himself,—and then, old man,
We 'll have a strift for it. [*he goes off.*

SCENE IV.

Evening. The Old Man sitting in his chair within his own door—he appears very ill—his daughter supports him.

Old Man. Oh what an icy pang shoots through my frame;
God help the feeble who do suffer thus!

Marg. Some woe hath fallen on thee in the city;
Tell me, and who that stranger was, dear father.

Old Man. Oh, ask me not of aught; I am afflicted—
Body and mind, I am afflicted sore!

Marg. Call upon God, my father, he will help thee. [*Ugolin comes up.*

Ugo. My good old friend, how does it fare with you?

Old Man. My son, I am afflicted—mind and body
Are suffering now together!

Ugo. [*to Marg.*] What means he?

Marg. I do not know: the guest of yesterday
Seduced him to the city; and perchance
The crowd, the noise, the newness of the scene
Have overcome his strength; or else perchance
He saw some scene of riot or distress
Which thus hath wrought upon his feebleness.

Ugo. Father, shall we support thee to thy bed,
And read to thee, and comfort thee with prayer?

Old Man. Ay, let me to my bed, that I may die!

[*they support him in.*

SCENE V.

Midnight. The Old Man lying on his bed—Ugolin and Margaret sit beside him—Margaret reads.

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality;

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,

Then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

Oh Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?

The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

[*she closes the book.*

Old Man. The sting of death is sin! and over death;
'T is the Lord Jesus Christ gives us victory!

Thank thee, my daughter; there is holy comfort
In those few words—
But think'st thou Ugolin
Will visit us to-night? I fain would have
His prayers before I die.
Marg. He is beside thee;
Father, he is beside thee, even now.
Ugo. My father, may the God of peace be with thee!
Old Man. [*looking earnestly at him*] Yes, thou art here, good Ugolin—good Ugolin!
And thou art good: dear child, give me thy hand.
My children, I for many years have hung
Like a dark cloud above your true affection;
But I shall pass away, and Heaven will crown
Your life with a long sunshine.
Marg. Dear, dear father,
Take not a thought for us; God has been good!
Thy life has been our blessing.
Old Man. Yes, my child,
How truly dost thou say that God is good.
I know that he is good; but my weak faith
Has failed my latter days. I have repined
That still my life had a prolonged date.
I saw not mercy in my length of years,
And I have sinned perchance a deadly sin!
Ugo. Remember, God is full of tender mercy,

And knows our weakness, nor will try our strength
Beyond what it can bear.

Old Man. Oh for a sign
That I might be accepted; that the sin
Of my repinings had been blotted out!
I fear to die, who have so prayed for death!

Ugo. Bethink thee, how our blessed Lord was tried,
And of the agony wherein he prayed
That that most bitter cup might pass from him!
He bore those pangs for thee, and by his stripes
Thou wilt be healed! Oh put thy trust in him!

Old Man. I am a sinner! save me, oh my God!

Ugo. Amen!

[*the old man turns his face to the wall. —Margaret and Ugolin kneel down and pray silently.*

SCENE VI.

Several days afterwards—a church-yard—a body has been committed to the grave; the mourners stand round—the stranger comes up as a casual observer —the minister repeats these words.

Min. "Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of his great mercy to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed, we therefore com-

mit his body to the ground: earth to earth; ashes to ashes; dust to dust: in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Strang. [*aside*] Thus is it, whether it be saint or sinner,
All are alike committed to the grave,
In sure and certain hope of resurrection
To life eternal! Well, the fools at least
Are charitable in this farewell rite.
[*he looks among the mourners.*
Sure that 's the old man's daughter! and that man
Is Pastor Ugolin! There then is buried
My hope of that repining, weary soul!
Death was before-hand with me. I ne'er dreamed
Of his sands running out, just yet at least;
Life is a slippery thing! I 'll deal no more
With any mortal who is turned three-score!
[*he hastens off.*

[*the funeral train moves away, preceded by choristers chanting.*

"I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, from henceforth, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; even so saith the spirit, for they shall rest from their labours."

THIS second defeat of Achzib was like a blow given by an unseen hand; it was an event altogether out of his calculation. He had heard how the spirit of the old man, in its moments of irritation, poured forth reproaches and murmurs against God, which would have been mortal sin had the heart responded to them. But his spirit resembled water in its dead calm, corrupt and unsightly, which nevertheless when agitated by the tempest overleaps its barriers, throws off its impurities, and rushes on in a strong, bright torrent. His discontent and his impatience were almost meaningless on his own lips; but addressed to him as the sentiments of another, to which he was required to assent, he started from their sinfulness, beholding, as it were, his own reflected image. This was an event beyond the range of Achzib's idea of possibilities. He was sceptical to all that virtue in human nature, which great occasions bring into action, though it may have lain dormant for half a life, and which may be regarded as a store in reserve for extraordinary emergency.

The old man seemed, as it were, to have slipped from his grasp; and, half angry with himself for being overcome by so apparently weak an opponent, he turned from the burial-place and walked on, he hardly knew whither, for many hours. At length he was recalled to his own identity by coming upon a village church-yard, where a funeral was taking place. The dead seemed to have been of the lower class of society, if you might judge by the appearance of the coffin, its humble appurtenances, and its few attendants; but there was a something about its chief and only mourner, which told that misfortune had brought her thus low. Yet was her whole air melancholy and wretched in the extreme; and so harrowed by grief, so woe-stricken, so wholly self-abandoned, that no one could see her for a moment without knowing that it was her son who had been committed to the dust, the only child of his mother, and she a widow.

Achzib remarked this to an observant stranger who stood by.

"You are right," he replied, "they bury the only child of a widow; a son, who having died before his time, will cause the mother's grey hairs to descend with sorrow to the grave!"

"How," inquired Achzib, "has her loss been so very great?"

"Know you not," rejoined the other, "that a mother mourns most, suffers most, for the child least worthy of her love? Man knows not to what an extent that mother's heart has suffered: it has been wounded unto death, and yet it lives on, enduring a life more painful than death, a life quivering with the sting of outraged love!"

"Was he not young," inquired Achzib; "how then has he committed so great sin?"

"You cannot have attentively regarded these things," replied the stranger, "or you would know that, for a young man, the most perilous of all conditions is to be the son of a widow; for losing the authority, the counsel, the example of a father, he falls into numberless temptations, against which a mother can be but an insufficient defence. Besides, young men, too often having experienced the easy, irresolute, uncertain government of a mother in their boyish years, cease to regard her with respect as they approach manhood."

"But," said Achzib, recalling to mind the firm principle and devoted affection of the Poor Scholar, "I have known such arriving at manhood, armed at all points against temptation, and cherishing in their souls the most ardent love, the most holy reverence for a mother."

"God forbid," replied the stranger, "that I should say all mothers are inadequate to the government of a son, or all sons incapable of estimating, and gratefully rewarding the unwearied solicitude, the never-sleeping affection of a mother; for I myself know a widow who has trained three noble sons from their fatherless boyhood, maintaining her own authority, and nurturing in their souls every virtuous and manly sentiment; and who now, adorning manhood, are as a crown of glory to her brows. And it may also be received as a truth, that love and reverence for a widowed mother will be as much a preservation from evil as the authority of a father—but these are the exceptions to the general rule, which is as I have said, that the sons of widows are the most peculiarly liable to temptation, and the least defended against it."

"I believe you to be right," replied Achzib, not a little pleased with the hint, which had inadvertently been given him. "I believe you are right! and of all temptations to which a young man so circumstanced is exposed, those of pleasure would be the most besetting," continued he, remembering the first sin of poor Luberg.

"Exactly so," said the stranger: "the timid, enervating system of female government, gives the heart a bias towards pleasure, without strengthening it for resistance, or even enabling it to discriminate

between good and evil. This is the snare into which such generally fall; and there is hardly a sin more sorrowfully degrading, or one which holds its victim more irreclaimably: he is as one self-conducted to sacrifice; a captive, who rivets on his own fetters, while he groans for freedom: for the indulgence of those vices miscalled pleasure, while they deaden the will, leave quiveringly alive the sense of degradation. How has the poor youth, who is now gone down to the dust, looked with streaming eyes upon pure and noble beings, whom though he still worshipped, he had not the power to imitate, and from whose society he was cast as a fallen angel from heaven! How, to obliviate the maddening sense of his own degraded condition, has he plunged into excesses which he abhorred! Alas, the spirit, writhing under the compunctuous sense of evil, and the hopelessness of good, is a sight upon which the angels of God might drop tears of pity!"

Achzib was satisfied with what he had heard; therefore, bidding his companion good day, he returned to the city. He had, however, a superstitious repugnance to making another trial in the scene of his late defeat; he therefore removed to a city where all was new to him, and very soon commenced his fifth essay, according to the hints thrown out by the stranger of the church-yard.

RAYMOND.

RAYMOND.

PERSONS.

RAYMOND.

ACHZIB, A STRANGER, AFTERWARDS BARTOLIN A MAN OF PLEASURE.

MADAME BERTHIER, THE MOTHER OF RAYMOND.

THE PASTOR, HIS GUARDIAN.

ADELINE, THE PASTOR'S DAUGHTER, BETROTHED TO RAYMOND.

CLARA, A YOUNG LADY OF THE CITY.

MADAME VAUMAR, HER MOTHER.

COUNT SIEMAR, THE LOVER OF CLARA.

SEVERAL SUBORDINATE CHARACTERS.

Time occupied, upwards of three years.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

A summer morning—Raymond sitting under a large tree in the fields—a small village, half hid among wood, is seen in the distance.

Raymond. How full of joy is life! All things are made
For one great scheme of bliss—all things are good,
As at the first when God pronounced them so:
The broad sun pouring down upon the earth

His bright effulgence; every lighted dew-drop
Which glitters with the diamond's many rays;
These flowers which gem the coronal of earth;
Those larks, the soaring minstrels of the sky;
Clear waters leaping like a glad existence;
Forests and distant hills, and low green valleys,
And feeding flocks, and little hamlet-homes,
All, all are good—all, all are beautiful!
Existence is a joy! I walk, I leap
In that exuberant consciousness of life
Which nerves my limbs and makes all action pleasure.
The vigour of strong life is to my frame
As pinions to the eagle: and my soul
Is as a winged angel, soaring up
In its full joy unto the heaven of heavens;
Thank God for life, and for the spirit which gives
The fulness of enjoyment unto life!

All that the soul desires of good and fair
Will I possess; knowledge that elevates
And that refines; and high philosophy,
Which wakes the god-like principle in man;
And in the founts of sacred poesy
I will baptise my spirit, and drink deep
Of its pure, living waters; and sweet music
Shall minister to me, like heavenly spirits
Calling me upwards to sublimer worlds!

All that is beautiful in art and nature—
Fair forms in sculptured marble, and the works
Of the immortal masters will I study;
And so imbue my spirit with a sense
Of grace and majesty, till it shall grow
Like that which it perceives! To me far lands,
Immortal for their ancient histories,
Shall be familiar places: I will seek
The Spirit of greatness where the great have dwelt,
And left behind eternal memories!

Am I not young, and filled with high resolves?
And like the sea my will shall be supreme;
Man shall not set it barriers, nor shall say
"Thus far, but yet no farther!" I will on!
Glory and pleasure at the goal I see,
And I will win them both: pleasure, which crowns
Glory with its most radiant diadem—
Pleasure, that springs from the proud consciousness
Of high achievement, purchased at a price
None but the great would dare to pay for it!

Ere long, dear mother, thou shalt see thy son
Among the honourable of the earth.
I know not how renown shall be achieved;
But that it *shall* is my most solemn purpose,
And this is my first earnest of success—

That without power, heaven gives not the desire!
Yes, yes my mother, I will crown thy age
With such transcendent glory of my deeds,
That thou shalt praise God for one chiefest blessing—
Thy son, thy dutiful, illustrious son!

I will not bow unto the common things
Men make their idols—I will stand apart
From common men—my sensual appetite
Shall be subservient to my loftier soul—
I will be great and wise, and rise supreme
Above my kind, by dominance of mind!

But who comes here? He hath the look of one
Who hath seen foreign travel, or hath dwelt
Much among men, such ever have that air
Of easy gaiety.—The walk through life
Without impediment; my country breeding,
Makes me embarrassed in a stranger's presence—
But I will up and meet him, and perchance
Improve this meeting to a better knowledge.

[*he rises, and meets a stranger, who is advancing over the fields towards him.*

Raym. Good morrow, sir!
You honour glorious Nature, coming out
Into the fields upon a morn like this!

Strang. Your greeting I return with cordial thanks,

And you too have done well to leave your books
To steal an hour for morning recreation.

Raym. One hour of a fair morning such as this
Will not suffice me: I shall give the day
To one long pleasure. 'T is a festival
My mother honours with great ceremony,
Even the birth-day of myself, your servant.

Strang. I do esteem myself most fortunate
To meet you on a morning so propitious!
For your frank greeting, and your kind respect
Have kindled in my soul a friend's regard
In your life's interest, and I gladly wish
To you long years, health, wealth, and happiness!

Raym. To you, a stranger, I owe many thanks;
And, as my quest this morning was for pleasure,
And time is of no count, let me walk with you;
I can conduct you to our fairest scenes,
And to some nooks of such sequestered beauty,
As dryads might have haunted in old times—
These are my native scenes, I know them all—
Go you unto the village?

Strang. I, like you,
Seek only pleasure on this sunny morning.
I left the city three days since, to spend
An interval of business in the country,
And chance directed me unto yon village,
Where I shall yet abide a day or two.

Raym. 'T is a sweet, quiet hamlet, buried deep
Within its wooded gardens! I am bound
Thither this evening, to its excellent pastor,
The kind and faithful guardian of my youth,
Since my good father's death,—but now whose trust
Expires upon this day.

Strang. Ha! one-and-twenty—
It is an age of happiness—the boy
Has not assumed the sternness of the man;
Heavy experience does not weigh down pleasure.
You are embarking, even now, young man,
Upon a glorious sea; spread wide your sails;
Catch every breath of heaven, and run down joy;
Make her your own before the tempest comes!

Raym. You are not a grave councillor, who bids
The inexperienced watch, and watch and wait,
Ever distrusting—still expecting evil!

Strang. Wisdom is wisest which is bought from proof.
Try all things, prove them, make your virtue sure
Upon the rock of wise experience!
Up, and partake of pleasure while you may;
A time will come, of feebleness and care,
When she will fly from you, howe'er you woo her!

Raym. My youth is vowed to study; therein lies
My pleasure:—knowledge, and the high reward

Of an ennobled mind, these are alone
The aim for which I strive!

Strang. A noble strift!
But knowledge of manhood will serve you more
Than closet-study or book-learning can.

Raym. As yet, I would not dare to trust myself
Into the world. I know that youth is weak,
And may be lured so easily aside!
I have a mother, sir, a widowed mother;
I am her only child—I would not leave her;
My life is vowed to make her bless her son!

Strang. Give me thy hand, young man, I honour thee!
A virtue such as thine may face temptation;
Like gold, it will come purer from the fire!

Raym. Kind sir, you do commend me all too much.
But we are now even at my mother's gate—
You must walk in, she will rejoice to welcome
One that has kindly conversed with her son.

Strang. A fair and stately mansion, with old woods
Girded around—an honourable assurance
That thy good father was a careful man,
And left to thee a patrimony clear!

Raym. 'T is a fair place; and let me make you, sir,
Further acquainted with it, and my mother,
She has the kindest smiles for friendly greeting!

Strang. No, my young friend, I must decline that pleasure—
A household festival is never mended
By presence of a stranger—for all mothers
Esteem such days solemn and sacred seasons—
So now farewell!

Raym. Kind sir, farewell to you!
I 'll pledge our friendship in a generous cup.

[*he parts from him.*

Strang. He will not cheat me like the widow's son
In the frieze-gown sitting among his books!
This is a scholar of another sort!
And spite his talk of virtue and high doings,
He 's mine, poor self-deluding boy, he 's mine!
But had I faced his mother, she had spied
The cloven foot beneath my saintliest guise—
She is a woman who has tried the world,
And found it a deceit; therefore she keeps
Her gentle Raymond like a Corydon,
Watching his silly sheep among the fields.
Fond mother, make a festival, thy son
Hath eaten the forbidden fruit this day!
And drink unto our further friendship, Raymond,
For all that it can give, thou shalt enjoy—
Beauty and gold; whate'er the world calls pleasure;
But thou must pay the stated price thereof!

Now fare thee well! I 'll meet thee this same eve,
Before the pastor and thy wisest mother
Do arm thee with suspicious wariness!

[*he goes off.*

SCENE II.

Evening—the west tinged with the fading clouds of a gorgeous sunset, the full-moon shining high in the heavens—Raymond and Adeline standing together on a garden terrace, before the open window of the house.

Raym. How like a fair face shining out of heaven,
Yon glorious moon appears! sweet Adeline,
All things I look upon are beautiful—
Even as I felt this morning, feel I now;
The mere perception of a vital power,
Is strong enjoyment; every breath I draw,
Is like the quaffing an inspiring draught
Of some old vintage, which, to every pulse
Doth send a bounding joy! old Jove felt thus,
Draining the nectar from the cup of Hebe!

Adel. Raymond, be sure he was some alchemist
You met this morning, who hath pondered out
The wonderful elixir, and hath given
To you a drop thereof! Did you not taste,
Or smell from a most curious, antique flask,

Less than my little finger, that he shewed you?
Depend upon it, Raymond, you 're immortal!
Now say, have you not drank the Elixir Vitæ?

Raym. Nay, Adeline, my soul ran o'er with joy
Before I met that stranger.

Adel. 'Twas because
You now can call yourself your own sage master.
We shall not see you, Raymond, as we used—
You are full-grown, and not of nonage now;
You will not come to study with my father
Those old Greek poets; I must read myself;
You will not be my lexicon again!

Raym. Sweet Adeline, I shall come more than ever;
But you forget, I have your father's leave
To lay those old Greek poets by, and read
Another book, whereto, my own dear love,
You must yourself be my sweet lexicon!

[*he kisses her cheek.*

Adel. Oh fie! my father should not give you leave
To put your studies by, for well I know
You are a-weary of them, and of us!

Raym. Hast thou not been mine angel for these years—
Oh ever since I was a little child?
But now much more than ever!

Adel. But this scheme
Of going to the city, I like not—

Why would you leave us? you can study here,
My father studies in this quiet place;
He ever is distracted in the city.

Raym. 'T was a mere vision! I but thought of it.

Adel. Well, think of it no more!

Raym. Now, let us in;
And ere I say good night, dear Adeline,
Let us have some sweet music—sing that hymn,
So full of awful sorrow, that I love,
Give me sad music when my heart is lightest!

[*they go in.*

[*Adeline is heard singing to her instrument.*

Father, from heaven look down,
Sorrow doth cover us;
Great waves pass over us;
The heavy waters of a stormy sea!
Our hope is but in thee—
Save us, oh father, save!

Night hath come down on us!
Our visages are pale;
Our drooping spirits fail;
We do confess our sin! Forgive, forgive!
Oh say that we shall live;
Though we have sinned, yet save!

Alas, the day is done!
God has abandoned us!
Oh sea, roll over us—
Cover us mountains, ere the Judge appear!
He will not, will not hear—
He will not, will not save!

ACT II. — SCENE I.

Twelve months afterwards—a chamber in a magnificent house in the city.

Bartolin. [*alone*] So far and all is well, for my good Raymond,
Though a self-willed, is still a hopeful scholar:
True, I have had to war with passion-starts,
And strong out-breakings of his natural love
Towards that tender, long-enduring mother;
But now her anger, and her stern upbraidings
Will do the work I had found difficult;
The severing of the latest bonds of duty—
Nor shall there lack me means to effect disunion;
Black rumours, based on truth, shall reach her ear—
His thriftless charges; his luxurious life;
His friends the dissolutest in the city;
His disregard of stated sacraments;
The lawless prodigal he is become,—
All this shall reach her by a thousand ways.

She will contrast the present with the past,
And note the work of twelve months on the boy,
Boastful of virtue; see the end of all
That proud ambition, which did plume itself
Upon a glorious eyrie 'mong mankind!
The mother's heart is keenly sensitive,
And, when it hath been wrung, and wronged like her's,
Doth take a tone so vehement in sorrow,
That it may pass for acrimonious hate,—
Thus stands the case at present!
With the tide
Of headlong pleasure we go sailing on,
Filling the echoing air with loud carousal.
She sits within her solitary home,
Eating her heart with miserable thoughts;
Affections blighted; hopes that are o'ercast,
And prayers that have no answer. Wretched mother,
Thy prodigal will ne'er return to thee!

But hark! there is the voice of merriment—
Raymond is loudest at the festive board;
Raymond is swiftest in the race for ruin;
Wildest in riot; greediest of applause;
Most daring in the insolent outbreaks
Of passion against custom; first in all things:

Goodliest in person; most refined in manners;
Witty and gracious; smiling like an angel,
Yet growing daily blacker, like a fiend!
Oh most accomplished sinner, thou art mine!

But hark again! their merriment grows louder;
Hence will I, and partake their revelry.

[*he goes out.*

SCENE II.

A lofty saloon, in which Raymond and his guests sit round a table furnished with the choicest wines.

Raym. [*filling his glass*] This is my birth-night, friends, make merry all!

Guests. Health and long life unto our noble host!

Raym. My friends, I thank ye,—now devote the night
To one long revel,—drown all care in wine!

[*they all drink.*

Why are you silent, friends? let us have song!

1*st Gen.* [*singing*:—

Down, down with the sorrows
And troubles of earth!
For what is our life made,
But drinking and mirth!

Drink and be glad, sirs,
Laugh and be gay;
Keep sober to morrow,
But drink to day!

Love's a deceiver,
He 'll cheat if he can;
Sweet innocent woman
Is wiser than man!
Trust her not, trust her not,
She will deceive!
Who wins her may gather
The sea in a sieve!

Laying up money
Is labour and care;
All you have toiled for
Is spent by the heir!
Knowledge is wearisome,
Save when the wise
Study whole volumes
In beautiful eyes!

So, down with the sorrows
And troubles of earth!
For what was our life made
But drinking and mirth!

Then drink and be glad, sirs,
Laugh and be gay;
Keep sober to morrow,
But drink to day!

Raym. A jovial song, and full of sage advice!
Friends, do as ye are told, drink ye to day!

[*he fills his glass; the guests all do the same.*

2*d Gen.* Now, by your leave, I'll give you an old song,
I heard a soldier singing on the rampart
Just as a bullet struck him.

All. Let us have it!

[*he sings.*

She stood before our Lady's shrine,
And offered gems and gold;
A stately woman, pale and sad,
Before her time grown old.

And softly, softly murmured she
A prayer so sad and low,
And hid her face with both her hands,
That none her grief might know.

That woman's prayer, unheard by man,
Went up to God on high,
Like an archangel's trumpet-voice,
That shakes the earth and sky.

"Give back my wanderer unto me,
Mine erring child restore!"
But the hills of heaven they answered her,
'He's lost for evermore!'

"Give back," she cried, "mine only one,
Have I not sorrowed sore!"
But the depths of hell made answer low,
'He's our's for evermore!'

Raym. Sir, you have cast a gloom upon our mirth.
Drink, friends, and let us drown the memory
Of this strange song in wine.

3*d Gen.* [*flourishing his glass and singing*:—

Where art thou, Nerisse the bright!
With thy jewels wreathed about thee,
Like the starry queen of night—
Love himself would die without thee!

Sweet Nerisse! thou art so fair;
Art so dowered with queenly graces,
That in heaven, if thou wert there,
Goddesses would veil their faces!

Enter SERVANT—*to Raymond.*

There is a lady, sir, doth crave admittance.

Raym. Dost know her? If she be the dancing girl
Who was here yesternight, let her come in.

Serv. I do not know her, sir. She is close veiled.

Gen. Let her come in, Nerissa wore a veil!

[*enter Madame Berthier, throwing back her veil.*

Mad. B. Peace with your idle jests!—I am not one
Come to partake your sinful revelries!

Raym. [*endeavouring to put her back*] Shame on you, Madame Berthier,—'t is unseemly!

Mad. B. I will not be thrust back! What are these men
That they should part the mother and her son!

Guests. [*to each other*] It is his mother,—it is Madame Berthier!

Raym. Come with me, mother,—let me speak with thee!

[*they go out.*

SCENE III.

A small apartment—Enter MADAME BERTHIER *and* RAYMOND.

Raym. It was not warrantable e'en in a mother
Thus to intrude on her son's privacy!

Mad. B. And this from thee, thou hope of my lone heart!
Ungracious son, is this thy love and duty!
They do not call me now a happy mother—
No, no, they need not—I have now no son!
Would I had followed thee unto the grave
In the kind innocence of thy young boyhood,—
Then I had wept for thee—then had I said
When sorrow came, "Oh if my boy had lived,
He would have been my comfort!"
[*weeps.*

Raym. Nay, be calm,
And hear me speak to thee! Have I not borne
Bitter invective with unwearying patience;
Hast thou not heaped reproach upon reproach,
Upbraiding on upbraiding, till I hid
Myself behind stern silence for repose?

Mad. B. Raymond, thou wast my son—my only child,
My life's life, and the glory of my age—

The dearest creature on the earth to me—
Was I to see thee perish and be still?
Was I to see thy soul upon the brink
Of black perdition, and not cry "beware!"
Oh cruel, pitiless unto thyself,
Unjust unto thy mother!

Raym. Thou 'rt unjust
To me by these unmerited reproaches!
Because I sought to live among mankind,
And with the gay be gay—and with the young
Live in light-hearted joy, must I, perforce,
Be a lost profligate?

Mad. B. Alas, my son,
Thou dost deceive thyself. This is not joy,
This giddy rioting! and call'st thou life,
This daily wasting of thy manhood's strength?
How art thou self-deceived! how art thou changed—
Changed mournfully without, as changed within!
Thy cheek has lost its beautiful hue of youth,
Thine eye its brilliant cheerfulness! Would God
That I could give my life a sacrifice,
And so redeem thee, my poor, erring son!

Raym. Alas, my mother, I have done thee wrong;
Forgive me! and may heaven forgive me too!

Mad. B. My son, my dear, dear son, thou wilt return—

Thou wilt make glad once more thy father's place—
Wilt not let shame and ruin cover us!

[*she embraces him and weeps.*

Raym. Now mother rest awhile, thou need'st repose;
These rooms are still, and I will send attendants
Who will regard thy comfort, ere thou go
Back to thy home.

Mad. B. I go not back without thee!
I will not leave thee in the cruel power
Of him that has no mercy—that vile man,
That heartless man,—the dissolute Bartolin!

Raym. Thou may'st reproach me, but my friends thou must not!

Mad. B. Thy friend! call him thy foe, thy cruel foe!

Raym. My mother, let our parting be in peace—
Thy over-anxious heart makes thee intemperate!
I go not hence, the city is my home—
Now fare thee well!

Mad B. Thou blind, deluded man,
Thou cruel son of a heart-broken mother!
Oh Raymond, Raymond, I came here in sorrow,
And thou wilt send me hence more sorrowful!
What shall avail me? I will kneel to thee—
I do implore thee to be merciful
To thine abused soul—my son, my son,

I bathe thy feet with tears, and my white hair
Bow to the dust! return, my child, return—
My prodigal, return to God, and me!

[*she sinks insensible to the floor. Raymond very much moved, raises her and supports her to the couch.*

Enter BARTOLIN.

Bar. The guests much marvel at your long delay,
Their mirth is silenced until your return.

Raym. Let it be silenced! let them all begone!
To-night I shall return not to the table!

[*exit Bartolin.*

Mad. B. [*faintly rising*] My son, I have beheld thee; and my heart
Bleeds with a cureless sorrow. I will hence;
What do I here in this strange house of mirth?
I will go back unto my lonely place!

Raym. Mother, thou shalt not leave me thus! awhile
Remain thou here with me, an honoured guest.
Come, I will lead thee to a fitter chamber,
Where thou shalt calm thy soul and rest thy frame.

Mad. B. Bless thee, my son! Oh be my age's stay.
How rich, how happy, how exceeding blest
A dutiful, dear child can make a parent!

[*they go out.*

Thou hast sworn that my love
Is a balm for distress,
If it blessed thee before,
'T will now doubly bless!

They tell me thou art not
So true as I deem,
And that I must awake
From my beautiful dream:

But thy goodness they know not
Who speak thus of thee;
Thou hast sworn, and I know
Thou art faithful to me!

Raym. [*starting up*] 'T is he! 't is he! I know him now indeed!

Clara. Who, Raymond? speak! and why art thou so pale?

Raym. Dost see him, Clara! him in the black cloak,
That solemn-looking man?

Clara. 'T is but a pastor;
I saw him, when we entered, gaze on us—
But there is nothing strange in such a thing.
Though they look grave, they are most pleasant men.

They laugh and sing; they are but stern outside—
We know a many very worthy pastors.

Raym. This is not such a one—thou know'st him not!

Hither he has not come for revelry—
I know him well; for he was my youth's guardian!

Clara. You need not fear him, he is not so now!
Come Raymond, let us leave him to himself,
He 's moralizing on these gaieties;
I 'll warrant you, he 'll make a sermon of them!

Raym. Be silent girl! I did not ask thy jests—
Rest on that couch till I return to thee.

[*he goes out.*

SCENE V.

An alcove in a sequestered part of the garden.

Enter RAYMOND, *and the* PASTOR.

Raym. Well, sir?

Past. And having seen, I do depart,
Bearing back with me a most sad conviction,
That thou art in the way that leads to death!

Raym. The privilege of an old friend allows
You to speak thus—nothing beside would give it!

Past. I should regard it as the sacred duty
Of my high office, to warn any man
Of his soul's danger; and think not that thou,

Who hadst a son's place in my aged heart,
Shalt pass unwarned! No, Raymond, I conjure thee
Flee from destruction, ere it be too late!
I charge thee not with sin,—be thine own conscience
Thy judge, as thine accuser! Ah, my friend,
Is this the splendid promise of thy youth?
Thy blameless life—thy high heroic virtue;
Thy lofty hopes—thy dreams of fair ambition;
The principles thy noble mother gave thee—
And thy affection for that injured mother?

Raym. Who is there, sir, that can look back and say,
In nought have I offended?

Past. None, my son!
All, all have sinned—all, all have fallen short
Of the full measure of their righteousness!
But this can not avail thee—couldst thou plead
Thus in the awful day, before thy Judge?
Thou must abjure all sin—must cleanse thy heart
And make thy life pure, ere thou canst look up
With any hope that there is pardon for thee!
More joy is there in heaven when one poor sinner
Returns to God, than over many just,
Who do not need forgiveness! Oh, come back,
Come back poor prodigal, to thy father's arms!
Come back my friend—virtue has truer joys
Than guilty pleasure ever can afford thee!

Raym. My more than father! there is one fair creature,
Whose virtue, whose dear love can win me back—
Thy daughter, can she love me and forgive?

Past. Alas, alas my poor heart-broken daughter!
It is too late for this. If thou hadst loved
That maiden, thou hadst ne'er run madly on
In such a wild career of vice and folly!

Raym. Thou canst not fathom man's mysterious heart—
Thou canst not comprehend how Adeline
Has been a shrined saint within my soul,
Still unpolluted by all baser worship—
When I forgot God, I remembered her!
Oh, might I hope, I would retrace my steps
Through burning agonies!

Past. Poor, erring man,
It is too late for hope! canst thou recall
The bitter woe of thy unkind desertion?
Oh, Raymond, Raymond, thou know'st not the pangs
Of that sad maiden's heart: how she grew pale
With hope that was a mockery; how she pined
For the companion of her lovely youth,
Till certainty of thine abandonment
Made love despair!

Raym. Oh, let me win her back
To love and happiness!
Past. She is betrothed
Unto another bridegroom—one more true,
More sternly true than thou wert!
Raym. Is she false?
Hath she too broken her vows!
Past. She was not false!
Oh, most unkind, come thou and see her spousals—
Come thou and see the drooping bride of death!
Methinks it would recall thee from thy sin
To see the cruel havoc it has made!
Raym. My father, on my knees beside her bed
I will abjure my sins! Give, give her to me—
Even from death will I redeem my bride!
Past. I heard a gaudy sinner at thy side
Singing her harlot songs!
Raym. Nay, she is pure!
But I have sinned—I do confess my sin—
'Fore heaven and thee. The vows I made to her
I do abjure, and my old faith take back!
Past. Thoughtless young man! If thou have any vows,
Hold them religiously; and use thy power
To keep that maiden free of sin and shame!
The faith thou profferest my dying daughter
Cometh too late—alas! alas! too late!

Raym. Life has no further hope, no direr pang—
My sin is past redemption!
Past. Raymond, no!
Poor Adeline forgives thee, so will God;
But thou must turn from sin! Bethink thee, Raymond,
Of thy heart-broken mother; turn thee back
Repentant to her arms—a mighty debt
It is thou owest her, of love unpaid!
Raym. Oh for a dark oblivion! Oh for death;
Oh for the blackest, lowest depths of hell,
So I might win forgetfulness!
Past. Peace, peace!
My heart bleeds for thee! Thou hast had my prayers,
My earnest prayers to heaven, and yet shall have them!
Raym. Thus dost thou speak, after the mighty woe
That I have heaped upon thee! Is this love,
Or is it some deep curse, disguised as love?
Past. My Raymond, it is thus a Christian man
Forgives his erring brother. And thou, thou
Wast as a first-born child unto my soul!
Raym. Let me begone! I am so bowed with shame—
So utterly unworthy—let me go!
Past. Yes, let us go; this gaudy place of sin

Is no fit shrine for humble penitence;
Come then with me!

Raym. Nay, nay, I go alone!
I have heard that which hath unmanned my soul;
Give me but time—I 'll meet thee on the morrow!

[*he turns hastily away, and passes among the trees.*

Past. Strengthen him, Oh Lord! The present time is precious:
Repentance comes too late that comes to-morrow!

[*he follows him.*

SCENE VI.

The house of Madame Vaumar—a noble apartment—Madame Vaumar and her daughter sitting together.

Mad. V. But what are his intentions towards you,
Ay? honourable marriage?

Clara. Why question it?
Have we not had, dear mother, proof on proof
Of his unwavering kindness unto us?

Mad. V. Presents and money he has ne'er withheld—
Of these, free-handed men are ever lavish;
With these they buy exemption from all bonds;
'T is therefore I suspect his pure intentions.

Clara. Suspect *him!* Oh, I should as soon suspect
The sun that shines at noon-day!

Mad. V. Nonsense, child!

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Madam, Methusaleh, the Jew, is here,
And doth require to see you.

Mad. V. Send him back;
Say that I am engaged, and cannot see him—
Or tell him, rather, that I am abroad!

Serv. I told him this, but it would not suffice him;
He will not leave the house unless he sees you.

Mad. V. Go then and tell him, I'll be down anon.
[*Servant goes out.*
These usurers will sure dictate the terms
Of their salvation on the judgment day!
Money he wants, and money I have none—
I'd meet a lion rather than this Jew!

Clara. He has had patience, mother, wondrous patience!

Mad. V. Pshaw, silly girl, he'll make us pay for it!

Clara. And yet we go on, ever spending more—
Far better were it to have paid this Jew,
Than to have spent a thousand crowns, my mother,
For one night's masquerade!

Mad. V. You simple child,
That never had the commonest worldly wisdom—
It is but wasting words to talk with you!

Clara. Well, mother dear, you have enough for both!

[*Madame Vaumar goes out.*

[*after a pause, Clara rises and adjusts her hair before a mirror, singing the while.*

Thy love may be rich and great,
Mine is more to me!
Gold it is gives love its weight
Unto one like thee.

My love, riding to the fight,
Wins all eyes to him;
Every other gallant knight
By his side looks dim.

My love in the minstrel's song
Has won golden fame—

[*she sees, through the mirror, Raymond entering.*

Clara. [*nodding to him*] Welcome, thou noble flower of chivalry—
Thy fame was well nigh sung! But Raymond, say,
Shall you be at the masquerade to night?

Raym. No, not to night.

Clara. Nay, but indeed you must!
The great Count Seimar, who is just returned,
And sets the wondering city all a-stir,
Goes there to night!

Raym. Well, let him go,
What is 't to me?

Clara. All women say the Count
Is handsome, wondrous handsome—and all men
That he is brave—we know that he is brave;
His warlike deeds bear testimony for him.

Raym. I shall not go; and do not thou go, Clara!

Clara. My mother's heart is bent upon my going,
And upon my appearing as a Houri;—
I like it not; far rather would I be
A peasant of Ionia, in the dress
You did admire so much.

Raym. Poor foolery this!
I pray thee, Clara, go not!

Clara. I would swear
That you were masquerading even now;
May 't please your reverence to give reasons good
For this new faith!
But, mercy on us! Raymond,
How pale you are! there 's sorrow in your eye—
What has distressed you? Have you seen again
That gloomy man that met us in the gardens?

Raym. No, my sweet love; and if my countenance
Betoken sorrow, it but tells a tale
Of a wild agony my soul passed through
In a strange dream last night.

Clara. Heed not a dream!

Raym. Alas, alas! it was no common dream—
It cleaves unto my burning soul, even now,
Like the irrevocable doom of God!
It told me that we, both of us, were damned!

Clara. Good heavens! 't is horrible—most horrible—
And you do look so stern—so darkly stern!

Raym. Not stern, but sad, and sorrowfully earnest.
Heaven is my witness, sinner as I am,
With what sincere conviction I conjure thee
To flee from folly, wherein lyeth death!
Thou tender heart, let not the curse come down
On both of us:—for me there is no hope;
Yet, though so black with guilt, I still revere
The virtuous—I still reverence purity—
And, for the unstained goodness of thy soul,
Love thee far better than thy outward charms;
And were I but a worthy, guiltless man,
How would I take thee to my bounding heart,
And bless my God for so great happiness!
But thy fate shall not be allied to mine—
I will not drag thee with me to the pit!

Clara. If thou must perish, I will perish with thee—
Suffer with thee—go down to death with thee!

Raym. Thou art too good, too noble to be lost!

Clara. But let me know thy dream, thy awful dream.

Raym. I dreamt that I was dead—and that, like Dives,
I woke in the eternal pit of sin!
I thought I had been judged—Oh, what a sum
Of crime was there against me!—crime which then
I saw deformed, and hideous in the light
Of God, and all the heavenly company!
I thought my mother did appear in heaven
And call for judgment on me!—my kind mother,
Whom I have wronged, and brought to misery!

Clara. Oh that thy mother loved me! Go to her,
My dearest friend, and reconcile her to thee!

Raym. I will, I will, and thou shalt comfort her!
But to my dream—Methought that I did hear
Those lips, which gave the thief upon the cross
Hope and redemption, say to me "Depart—
Depart thou cursed, to eternal fire!"
And, by a power I did not dare control,
I was cast down, and down, and ever down
Into the eternal gulph, yawning and black;
Whose depth at length I reached, a world of woe!

Where sin put off all mask, and did appear
Monstrous and vile ; and where each countenance
Wore the expression of a hopeless pang—
Wailing was there, and gnashing of the teeth,
And every outward sign that tokeneth woe.
"Abide thou here!" said one, whose word seemed fate,
" Abide thou here with her whom thou hast drawn
From the high beauty of her innocence ! "

Clara. Ah, gracious God! 'tis like a frightful warning,

Raym. This was my dream. Not indistinct and vague
Like common dreams, but bearing the impress
Of stern reality. There, too, I saw,
Like one rejoicing o'er a sacrifice,
Him that has been mine evil genius!

Clara. What, Bartolin ?

Raym. Methought he was a fiend,
And called his fellows to rejoice o'er me
As o'er a victim! I abhor that man—
I know that he is crafty, base, and cold—
And yet he hath so subtly wove himself
Into the web of my accursed life,
That he makes up a fearful part of it!

Clara. Would that you had not had this horrid dream!
And yet, dear Raymond, it was but a *dream!*

Raym. Thus do we ever strive to put back truth:
'T was but a dream, we say—I tell thee, Clara,
It was a dream that doth foreshew my doom!

Enter MADAME VAUMAR, *in great agitation.*

Mad. V. Give me your diamonds, Clara, they must go
To satisfy this avaricious Jew!

Clara. My diamonds! those that Raymond gave unto me!

Mad. V. Ay, girl! this Jew would have thy very heart's blood!
He doth demand with brutal insolence
The payment of the sum already due—
Or pledge of jewels equal to the value—
Or some rich friend as a security!

[*she throws herself into a chair, and wrings her hands.*

We are undone! poor Clara, we are beggars—
In the hard hands of a usurious Jew!

Raym. Madam, what sum requires this usurer?

Mad. V. Far more than we can raise! three thousand crowns—
But Clara's diamonds will be pledge sufficient—
Why do you not obey me, Clara? fetch them!
Sir, you must pardon such a use of them,
But we are poor, and poverty is forced
To make such sacrifice as wealth conceives not.

Raym. Nay, nay, my Clara, you shall keep your baubles!
The debt shall be discharged—where is the man?
Mad. V. No, dearest sir, you shall not thus o'erburthen
Yourself with our distresses!
Raym. 'T is my pleasure!
Three thousand crowns, you say, is his demand?
Mad. V. Three thousand crowns, sir, with a large arrear
Of shameful interest.
Raym. May be four thousand crowns?
Mad. V. 'T will be that sum, at least.
Raym. He is below—
I 'll see him and discharge the debt anon.
Clara. Alas, sir, you will surely curse the day
You knew us, with our great necessities—
We are so much your debtors!
Raym. I am yours!
But now, adieu! madam, to you good day!
[*he bows, and goes out.*
Clara. Most generous man! most noble, godlike man!
Mother, are you not 'whelmed with gratitude?
And yet I would we were not thus indebted.
Mad. V. 'T is nothing, child, for *him*—four thousand crowns—
'T would go in some wild folly, if not thus:

And if he love you, he is proud to serve you—
If not, why let the counterfeit pay dearly
To hide his baseness!

Clara. You may reason thus,
I cannot! Oh, he is a godlike man!

Mad. V. Well, child, I go unto the promenade—
You must walk too, this clear fresh air will heighten
The colour on your cheek, too delicate else;
And you must wear your brightest looks to-night!
Come, come, I wait for you.

Clara. I shall not walk—
My heart is weary—I shall to my chamber.

[*she goes out; Mad. V. follows her.*

SCENE VII.

The house of Raymond—he and Bartolin sitting at a table, with papers before them.

Raym. And say you there 's no residue?

Bar. No—none!

Raym. And that this money cannot be obtained?

Bar. I say again, it cannot!

Raym. Are there none
Who will advance this money on my bond?

Bar. Your bond is nothing without means to back it—
It cannot be obtained!

Raym. It must! it shall!
Money has hitherto been plentiful—
Apply, sir, where you have applied before!
Bar. I have applied; and this was all my answer.
[*he produces a small sealed packet.*
Raym. Well, sir, and what is this?
Bar. Nay, break the seal!
Raym. [*opening the packet*] What things are these?
Bar. With tears, she bade me say
That she had nought else left—her wedding ring,
And her dead husband's Bible.
Raym. Oh, my mother!
Thou cruel, godless wretch; hast thou been draining
From that heart-broken mother, her poor all!
Was it from her thou got'st the easy gold
With which thou sinn'dst,—and leddest me to sin!
Bar. Did you not bid me get you gold; and swore
You cared not whence, nor how?
Raym. Thou heartless sinner;
Thou pander to iniquity! May heaven
Visit this mother's sorrow on thy head!
When came this message to thee?
Bar. Full seven days since.
Raym. Full seven days since! and yet you told me not.

Bar. You gave me not the chance! Have you not shunned me?
Have you not flung at me opprobrious looks
Whene'er we met, and passed, as if I were
A loathsome leper?

Raym. 'Cause I hated thee—
Because I know thee! and I fain would not
Breathe of the air thy presence hath polluted.

Bar. 'T were better that we parted!

Raym. It were best.

Bar. I thought not to have found you, sir, ungrateful!

Raym. I do not owe thee gratitude, but curses!

Bar. We have had many happy days together,—
We have had jovial nights. I would not part
From an old boon companion, with a grudge.
When this hot fit is by, you 'll need my service,
And I 'll attend your summons.

Raym. Hateful reptile;
Too long I have endured thee. Get thee hence!

Bar. [*aside*] I will return these insults tenfold on thee—
And thou shalt find the reptile has his fangs!

[*he goes out.*

Raym. [*after a pause, taking up the ring*]
Small golden circlet—pledge of holy wedlock;
How have my mother's eyes been fixed on thee!

In joy, at first—the happy, wealthy bride
Of a good man!—and then in that great sorrow
Which fell upon her heart, when death came down
And left her in her early widowhood!
Next, came the o'erwhelming agony of life—
Outraged affection; crushed and withered hope;
The blight of being—poverty; and shame,
For a lost, guilty son!—how turned she then
Her dimmed eyes upon thee!
Oh, thou mute thing
That yet reproachest with a tongue of fire;
I hear thy admonition! I will fly
To her, and save her!

[*he hastens out.*

SCENE VIII.

A meanly furnished garret—a poor woman at her work; a knock is heard—she opens the door, and Raymond enters.

Raym. Lives here not Madam Berthier, my good woman?

Wom. Alas, sir, no!—she died a week ago.

Raym. Died—woe's me! Said you truly she was dead?

Wom. Yes, sir, she died, and of a broken heart,—
I knew her heart was breaking at the first.

They who have had much sorrow know its signs,
Howe'er disguised; and I have had my share.

Raym. Good woman, let me take this seat, I 'm faint.

Wom. Alas, sir, then you knew poor Madam Berthier—
Methought she had no friends, and none that loved her!

Raym. Died she within this room?

Wom. Upon that bed—
A poor, mean bed; yet was she thankful for 't.

Raym. Oh, she was used to many stately comforts;
And she died there!

Wom. Ay; now, methinks, I see her,
With her thin clasped hands and sunken eyes,
Praying to Heaven to bless a graceless son,
That had reduced her unto poverty!

Raym. Alas, alas; he was a cruel son!

Wom. He must have been a cruel, wicked man;
For to the very last he did distress her
With unjust, never-ending claims for money.
The few things that she left of worn-out garments
Could hardly bury her!

Raym. Poor martyred saint!
The curse of heaven will light upon her son!

Wom. Good sir, it would have melted his hard heart

To have seen her die! Her last prayer was for him—
A prayer that would have moved a heart of stone.
She always called him her poor prodigal—
She was an angel, sir; a meek, good angel!

[*she weeps.*

Raym. [*giving a few gold pieces*]
Take these; and may the Almighty Lord of mercy
Bless thee, for thy compassion to this woman!

Wom. Heaven bless you, sir, for I have seven small children—
Seven fatherless little ones!

Raym. Alas for you;
And I pray God, that of the seven, there be
No prodigal!

[*he hurries out.*

Wom. Ah, 't is some man of sorrow—
Some conscience-stricken prodigal, may be—
Perchance the son of Madam Berthier!
Perchance, say I?—I *know* it was her son.
Christ give him penitence; for a mighty sin
Lies on his soul—the blood of that good mother!

ACT III.—SCENE I.

The house of Madame Vaumar—she and Clara sitting together.

Mad. V. Thou foolish girl,—with all a woman's weakness,
But not a woman's pride! Why, this great Count
Will make an empress of thee!
Clara. Dearest mother,
It is in vain to urge—I will not see him!
Mad. V. Not see him! He, the courtliest gentleman;
High in the Prince's favour; one that keeps
The best establishment in all the city—
Coaches and horses, hounds and liveried servants;
Splendour at home, magnificence abroad.
I 'll lay my life this Count will marry thee!
Clara. It moves me not—Indeed I could not wed him;
Although I know the honour is so great!
Mad. V. Not wed him? Why there 's not another woman
But thinks it heaven, if he but look at her.
Clara. Their reasoning is not mine! No, mother, no!
If 't were the Prince, I would not break my faith!

Hast thou forgot the never-ending kindness;
The long-tried zeal; the goodness of poor Raymond!
There was a time when thou didst smile on him;
Call him thy friend; and say that it was heaven
If *he* but looked on us!

Mad. V. Thou simple child;
Wilt never learn the wisdom of the world!
Why, he 's been acting the wild prodigal,
And now has spent his substance. All the city
Knows he is pennyless!

Clara. Kind, generous heart!
For us he spent his substance; and we now,
Like common worldlings, owing him so much,
Forsake him in his need. No, mother, no;
In good or ill, I never will desert him!
My heart is his, and so shall be my hand,
If e'er I wed!

Mad. V. Thou wed a ruined man—
A man, for whom the prison doors do gape!
Thou marry Raymond! when Count Seimar woos.
I will disown thee, Clara, if thou do,—
And may the curse of poverty cling to you,
Like cureless leprosy!

Clara. Hush, dearest mother!
Surely thou dost not know what true love is!
To shrine within the heart's core, one dear image;
To think of it all day, and all the night;

To have sweet dreams of it! Thou dost not know
What 't is to be beloved; to see the soul
Beaming from eyes all tenderness and truth!
Mad. V. Wild, raving foolery! Tell me not of love,
It is a word of mere conventional use,
That passes among men like forged coin,
Current at first; till time, that all things proves,
Reveals it of base metal!
Clara. You forget
How Raymond paid the Jew—and how since then
He has heaped favours on us!
Mad. V. Tell me not
Of favours everlastingly, and gifts!
I 'm weary of their memory, as of him.
To-morrow eve Count Seimar will be here;
And I command thee, meet him graciously;
And wear thy velvet bodice and thy diamonds!
Clara. I 'll wear my diamonds for no man but Raymond!
But if thou love me, dearest, best of mothers,
Urge me not thus! I do not love Count Seimar—
My heart aches, and my soul is full of sorrow!
Mad. V. Let go my hand! hast thou not heard my words!
Let go my hand, for I have much to do.
Thou know'st my will; nor shall I pardon thee
If thou dare disobey! [*she goes out.*

Clara. 'T is seven days
Since I beheld his face; seven weary days—
And calumny since then, his precious name
Hath charactered in lies; and turned men's hearts
From him—ay, let them turn; and woman's smile,
Let it change too—let him become a proverb,
A word despised and loathed, it matters not—
To me, he still is Raymond! Shame with him
I would prefer, to glory with another;
Even were he richer, nobler than Count Seimar!
But let me hence, and in my silent chamber
Nerve my sick heart to meet the morrow's guest,
If so, I must—yet will I not deceive
Count Seimar in this matter!

[*she goes out.*

SCENE II.

Night — Raymond's chamber, lighted by a lamp; Raymond, in a loose dressing gown, starting from the bed on which he had thrown himself:

The furies were no fiction! Sad Orestes
Fled not from land to land from a vain shadow!
They are no fiction—would to heaven they were!
No! they are present with me, night and day—
Spectres of days, and months, and years misspent;

Of talents wasted—hopes which I have murdered!
Too late I know my folly—peace is gone;
And hope and self-esteem; and that calm joy,
The fruit of virtuous days, and tranquil nights!
My friends, the early and the kind, are lost;
My cold neglect has broken a mother's heart,
'Mid shameful, miserable poverty.—
My lawless life has tarnished a good name;
My thriftless cost, has ruined a fair fortune—
My sinful course has shattered a strong frame!
Men, that I should have scorned in my pure years,
Are now my sole companions—thus I 'm fallen!
Oh, that I were again a happy boy,
Conning my book beneath the orchard-trees,
Without a care from morn to eventide!
Where are those lovely visions of my youth—
Fair fame, and Adeline; and sons, and daughters,
Growing around us in my native home—
Where? with the things that were—my peace of mind,
My innocence, my health and my good name!

[*a bell tolls the first hour of the morning.*

Midnight is past—the morning hath begun;
My doom will be, one night, without a morning!
Millions on millions from the earth have passed
Unto the eternal day; but I am one
Made for the blackness of enduring night;

A reprobate! cast by the Eternal Father
From his great scheme of pardon; the dear blood
Of Christ was never shed for my redemption;
And if I should bow down and cry for mercy,
My cry would be a damning blasphemy!

[*he paces the room in despair; then throws open the window and looks out,*

So shone the moon, so looked the paly stars,
In the gone years of my pure innocence!
'T is even so!—and this is my birth-night!
Alas, alas, and where is that kind mother,
That made of old, this eve a festival?
The solemnest, yet the happiest of the year!
Of old it passed not a forgotten time,
Unnoted, but for some chance circumstance!
Of old I had a memory for all joy;
And read my Bible, and believed that Christ,
Blessing the pure in heart, had blessed even me;
And that belief brought blessings, like the visits
Of angels entertained unawares.
Of old I laid me down to rest at night,
And said my prayers, and put my trust in God!
Of old I had no fears, nor black remorse,
That sered my soul and withered up my being;
Love, peace, and joy, and duty, all fulfilled,
Made every day a joyful festival!

Why died I not in that good time of grace;
In those most blessed days of innocence,
That knew not sin, and therefore knew not sorrow?

[*he turns slowly away; and seeing his father's Bible, opens it and reads.*

"I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, who need no repentance."

[*he closes the book, covers his face with his hands, and weeps bitterly. A loud knocking is heard at his door, and Bartolin enters, hurriedly.*

Raym. Villain, how now!

Bar. No time is this for wrath!
I am but come to warn you against danger.
Hence with you to your hiding place! One hour
From now, and you are in a dungeon!
The myrmidons of law have gained access
Within your doors, and now approach your chamber,
Armed with authority: fly, fly hence!
Or, better still, with me—give me your hand;
In wrath we parted, let us meet as friends!

Raym. Begone with you! off with your fawnings vile;
I loathe them as your counsel—get you hence!

Bar. Even as you list, fair sir; so fare ye well!

[*he goes out; a tumult is heard below— Raymond, wrapping himself in a cloak, goes out by a private door.*

SCENE III.

The interior of a gaming house—parties of gentlemen sit drinking wine in various parts of the room, others are playing at dice; Raymond, pale and with a contracted brow, playing with Count Seimar; Bartolin stands apart, as one of the servants of the establishment, observing Raymond, who has played all the evening with ill-luck.

Count S. [*taking up money*] Despair not, Sir—
Fortune's a fickle goddess;
The next turn will be yours, "faint heart ne'er won:"
You know what says the proverb, "gold nor ladies."

Bar. [*aside*] Most sapient Raymond; bible-reading fool!
Is this the end of your religious fervour?

[*he looks at a small billet.*

Within the dainty folds of this smooth paper
Lie words which, like some cabalistic signs,
Have fear and death in them! Ha, ha! Count Seimar;

Thou keepest carelessly a lady's secret,
Else hadst thou never dropped this perfumed paper!

[*Raymond again loses the game; he flings down his last gold, hurls the dice upon the floor, and starts up with furious gestures.*

Ten thousand curses fall upon all play!
Ten thousand curses on the dupes of it!
I am a ruined man, beyond retrieve—
I am a cursed, ruined, wretched man! [*pours out wine.*
[*Aside*] Let this assist my purpose—fool, fool, fool!
Most senseless fool! But let me drink, and die!

[*he drinks—Bartolin goes out; Raymond throws on his cloak and rushes out also.*

SCENE IV.

The porch, leading into the street; enter Raymond, like one beside himself, with his hand on his dagger.

Bartolin. [*presenting the billet*] This sir, to yours, but to none other hand;
Thus were my orders, absolute—Good night!

Raym. [*reads*] "My daughter has consented to be yours; we will expect you at the appointed hour. Raymond is a pennyless prodigal. Adieu."

[*turning to the address.*

"To the most honourable Count Seimar."

And this writes Madame Vaumar to Count Seimar!
And this is Clara's faith! Oh most accursed—
Oh most unkind, perfidious of deceivers!
Some strange mistake has given to me the billet,
Intended for my rival. But 't is well—
The veil at length is torn from my delusion!
I am a pennyless prodigal! ha, ha!
A pennyless prodigal! and they who robbed me,
Make this the plea for my abandonment!
I am their jest no doubt, their merriment!
A prodigal! Count Seimar is a saint,
And shall this night make elsewhere reckoning—
And Madame Vaumar shall hear news to-night,
Other than of her daughter's marriage-day!

[*he wraps his cloak around him, and walks sullenly away.*

SCENE V.

Midnight—a dark and lonely street in the suburbs; enter COUNT SEIMAR, *singing in a low voice.*

Come, pledge me in this cup of wine,
And let us have a joyful night,
Thou hast my heart, thy heart is mine—
Why should we part ere morning light!
Come, pledge me in this brimming cup—

Raymond [*rushing upon him with his dagger*]
And she consented to be yours to-night!
Yours, traitor! take you this—and this—and this,
For a bride's portion! [*he stabs him many times*].

Count S. [*drawing his weapon*] Help! 'gainst a murderer!
Ah, villain! is it you?
Help! help! or 't is too late!
[*he falls.*

Raym. [*striking him again*] Ye said I was a prodigal! ay, ay—see then
I 'll be as prodigal of thrusts as gold!

Count S. [*faintly*] Oh heavens, I am a murdered man; and none
Are near to help!
For Christ's sake, give me help!
God pardon me! for I have been a sinner!

Watchmen. [*in the distance*] We hear the cry—and help is now at hand!
[*Raymond sheaths his dagger, and passes off in an opposite direction.*

Watchmen. The voice was in this quarter; and see there
Lies the poor murdered—yonder flies the murderer!
[*part pursue Raymond; others surround Count Seimar.*

1*st W.* Ah, what a horrid pool of blood is here!

2nd W. Run, call a doctor! time may not be lost!

3rd Watchman, runs off.

1st W. [*kneeling down by the Count*]. A doctor will be here in half a minute—

In the meantime give us your name, good sir,
And we will call your friends, or take you to them.

Count S. [*very faintly*] I am Count Seimar! all the city knows me—

My murderer is one Berthier, a base man!

2nd W. What does he say?

1st W. It is the great Count Seimar!

2nd W. Oh, woful chance!

1st W. The prince will pay us richly
For help we give—let 's bear him to the palace!

[*they attempt to raise him.*

Count S. It is too late—too late! let me die here!

[*he dies.*

1st W. If you have any message for the living
Speak it within my ear, most noble sir.

[*he listens for some time.*

He 's dead! alas, all 's over with him now!

2nd W. Ah, what a cruel murder—
God have mercy
Upon his soul!

Enter 3rd WATCHMAN, *and* DOCTOR.

1st W. He is stone-dead, poor soul!

2nd W. And 'tis no other than the great Count Seimar!

Doctor [*after examining the body*] It is too late! there is no life within him—
He has had seven wounds; the least were mortal!
Alas poor Count! But call ye the police,
And let the base assassin be pursued!
And this deformed body, carry ye
Unto the palace.

[*they raise the body, and all move off.*

SCENE VI.

Midnight—savage glen among mountains—thunder and lightning, with furious gusts of wind.

Enter RAYMOND, *in a monk's habit.*

For these seven days, like an ill-omened thing
Skulking in dens, and lonesome, hideous caves,
I have sustained my life with roots and herbs,
And quenched my thirst with water of the rock;
Meet sustenance for a vile murderer!
Thus wandered Cain, through melancholy years,
A fugitive and vagabond! I too,
Thrust out from man, and the kind charities
That humanize, bear with me a black curse
That makes my being an enduring death!

[*the lightning strikes a tree before him.*

Death is a-nigh me! would that the fierce bolt,
That now has smitten yon branched, vigorous oak
From its rock-fortress, like a slender reed,
Crashing and shivering to the vale below,
Had smitten me in its stead, and in a moment
Ended my woe! The undefined future,
Once so terrific in its mystery,
Hath not more terror now than hath the present,
In its o'ermastering consciousness of guilt!

[*the storm rages more fearfully; trees are torn up, loose crags tumbled into the glen, and sounds of the gathering tempest are heard in all the hollows of the mountains.*

Even like this outward tempest are the pangs
Of merciless remorse; but to the one
Succeeds a calm—no calm succeeds the other!
At nightfall I descried a lonely hut,
Scarcely discernible from rocks and stones,
But for its roof of black and shaggy furze,
And the wind-scattered smoke that shewed the eye
'T was human habitation. Here about,
Among these crags, it lay. Another flash
Will shew it through the darkness—
Ah, 't is here!
Gloomy and lone, a place of guilt it seems,
Yet will I enter, for I wildly long

To see again a human countenance!

[*he knocks at the door, which is opened by an Old Man.*

Raym. Father, I crave the shelter of your roof
From this night's storm!

Old Man. Ay, enter, thou art welcome.

[*he goes in.*

SCENE VII.

The interior of a miserable shed, lighted only by a small wood-fire,—the Old Man and Raymond sit by the fire.

Old Man. Com'st from the city?

Raym. Seven days since, I left it.

Old Man. Thou heard'st then of one Berthier, how he murdered
The great Count Seimar?

Raym. Yes, I heard of it—
But I just left the city as it happened.

Old Man. Thou didst not hear then, how from sanctuary
He made escape, in habit of a monk;
Nor of the damning stain he has affixed
Unto his memory, black enough without it?

Raym. Good father, no; what is 't?—I know it not!

Old Man. Why, that fair thing, who risked her life for his,

As she had done her good name heretofore,
Was found next morning dead!

Raym. Dead! say'st thou, father?

Old Man. Ay, on the altar stone, which of her blood
Will ever keep the stain—the altar
Where he found sanctuary—and in the city
'T is thought he murdered her!

Raym. That did he not!

Old Man. Art of his council then? Perchance thou know'st him—
Perchance didst furnish that poor faithful girl,
With means of his deliverance!

Raym. [*after pacing the room several times, and struggling with his emotions.*
Father, my limbs are weary—let me rest
I pray thee, on this straw.

Old Man. Rest, if thou can!

[*the Old Man lights a small lamp, and places it so as to throw the light on the countenance of Raymond, and then sits down beside him.*

Raym. Father, I thank thee for thy courtesy;
But thy lamp's light I need not, and I fain
Would slumber unobserved.

Old Man. A monarch's taste,
Who unobserved would hold his meditations!

Raym. Old man, a mighty sorrow weighs my soul :
Thou hast not passed thy three-score years and ten,
Without experience of some human pangs—
Respect my sorrow then, and give me peace!

Old Man. Sorrow, the wise have said, is born of sin ;
And peace lies nowhere but within the grave.

Raym. Alas! thy words are true.

Old Man. Can'st not repent?—
This is another way of getting peace,
And he who asketh shall receive, 't is said.

Raym. Some sins there are, repentance cannot cure!

Old Man. Yet they are few—'t is a long catalogue
Of pardonable sins. The dire offences
Scarce number seven — thus, the sin 'gainst knowledge ;—
'Gainst parents disobedience, which shall bring
Their grey hairs to the grave with bitter sorrow ;—
Luring the innocent to black perdition ;—
Denying God, whether by word or deed ;—
And lastly, doing murder—these are deadly.
But who of them is guiltless, need not fear—
And these, my son, thou can'st not have committed—
Thou art too young for such black sins as these.

Raym. God knows my sin—I do confess to none.

Old Man. Thou dost belie thy habit—for ye teach
That a great virtue lyeth in confession.

Raym. Cease, cease to trouble me—leave me alone!

Old Man. From me far be it to disturb thy soul,
I will withdraw. [*he goes into an inner room.*

Raym. My sins are those he named—
Mine are those deadly sins—there is no pardon—
With God there is no pardon—nor with man.
And *she* dead!—then what boots it to live on!
I am an outcast from the face of man—
Caves are my hiding-places, and my food
The miserable product of a soil
Cursed for some ancient sin! Why should I live?
None love me on the earth—my crimes have made
My being desolation, and brought ruin
Upon the faithfullest spirit! Let me die!
[*he takes a small phial from his bosom.*
Misery did arm me thus against myself—
I drink to death. Death, be a gracious friend
Unto a wretched soul that flies to thee!
[*he drinks.*
Soul, gird thyself, a journey lies before thee,
From which no human voice can call thee back!
[*he lies down, closes his eyes, and remains for some minutes motionless. Meantime the Old Man comes forth as Bartolin, and stands beside him.*

Raym. Oh, hast thou found me here, mine enemy!
Bar. Thou sought'st thyself the shelter of my roof!
Raym. Lying dissembler, thou hast fooled my soul!

May heaven avenge my blackest sins upon thee,
Thou tempter unto evil!
Death is with me—
The dimness of the grave doth seize on me!
[*he falls back.*
[*Aside.*] My enemy shall not behold the pangs
That rack my feeble being. I will die
In rigid, groanless silence!
Bar. His hair is white,
The furrows of old age are on his cheeks,
And yet his years are few—oh, sin and sorrow,
What foes are ye to manly strength and beauty!—
See, his clenched hands—his rigid, stone-like brow—
His grinding jaws, and those thick-starting dews,
Like water-drops; these are the outward signs
Of the great mortal struggle!
Raym. [*opening his eyes, which have a glazed, wild look, and speaking like one in a dream*]
I hear their mournful voices! my heart faints—
Alas, alas, I am undone—undone!
Darkness is with me, but mine ears are open!
Oh, was a human soul of so great worth
That angels mourn for it? My God, my God!
Hark once again—there is a wail in heaven!
[*the tempest without gains strength, and low wailing sounds are heard, as of spiritual voices.*

Mourn, mourn celestial spirits,
Angels of God, who have your thrones on high!
O cease your triumph, bright-eyed cherubim;
Sons of the morning, let your light be dim;
And let there go through heaven a wailing cry!
One that was meant of your bright host to be,
Hath fallen, fallen!
A human soul hath lost its heavenward way,
The cruel tempter hath received his prey!
O wretched soul, new-born to misery,
How art thou fallen!
Alas, how art thou fallen!

[*the countenance of Raymond becomes more ghastly, the convulsions of death succeed, and he expires with a deep groan. Bartolin walks out in silence; and, after a pause, the hut is filled with a strain of sad and low music, as if accompanied by the following words:*

A song of mourning let each one take up!
Take up a song of woe—
The spirit is gone forth to the unknown,
Yet mightier pangs to know!

from our bright company,
Parting, then, we mourn for thee,
O my sister, early taken,
O my sweet-voiced sister of midnight memory!

The cruel nature of Achzib was unmoved by the moral ruin before him; in him was neither pity nor remorse.

"As the tree falleth," said he, "so it lyeth; and there is no repentance in the grave!" While he thus spoke, the Pastor entered. "Grant me the shelter of thy roof," said he, "for one hour; and when the storm hath abated, I will pursue my journey."

"Whither dost thou journey?" inquired Achzib.

"I seek a lost sheep of my Father's fold," replied the old man sorrowfully.

"Behold!" said Achzib, lifting the cloak from the face of the dead, "him whom thou seekest — Raymond — who hath even now committed self-murder!"

"My son! my son!" exclaimed the Pastor, falling upon his knees beside the body. "Alas, my

son, hast thou gone forth to the eternal judgment with this mortal sin upon thy soul!" and he buried his face in his hands, and wept like a woman.

"This man must have been dear unto thee!" said Achzib, interrupting the Pastor's sorrow.

"Oh!" replied he, rising, "the human soul is very precious; and this man was dear to me, even as a son!"

"He hath confessed to me much and grievous sin," said Achzib.

"Alas, he was a sinner, but I had hoped the day of grace was not over;" replied the Pastor,—"he was a great sinner, yet was not his nature evil; remorse followed crime, and heart-stinging repentance. God had not wholly abandoned him, and he who knows how we are tempted, knows also how to forgive!"

"Methinks," said Achzib, "thou wouldst excuse the sinner; thou wouldst destroy the distinction between virtue and vice."

Nay, nay," replied the Pastor, "I know we are all sinners, and this young man the chiefest of them; but I dare not limit the mercy of God. I remember the thief on the cross; the publicans and sinners of the Gospel; and I hoped that though he should not have found pardon from the justice of man, he might yet have found pardon with heaven."—And again the aged man covered his face and wept.

"I will leave thee to thy meditations," said Achzib, and went out. The Pastor combated his emotion, and approached the dead; he lifted the already whitened locks from the young man's forehead. "Oh my son, my son!" exclaimed he, in the words of the royal mourner, "would God, I had died for thee! 'Father, which art in heaven,'" said the old man, falling on his knees, "prayer availeth not for the dead; thy justice hath determined what is meet: but oh, by the tears our Lord shed for Lazarus; by the bloody sweat, the trembling spirit, and the mortal agony, I pray thee, if it be possible, pity and forgive! Oh, let the blood shed on Mount Calvary avail somewhat—let the prayer for the murderers avail—'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!'

"If there was good in him, though less than an atom, remember it—I know thou wilt, for thou art merciful; and even in the midst of despair, I bless thee. I bless thee, for the remorse which lived in the heart of this sinner—I bless thee, for the suffering he endured—the poverty, the shame, the hunger, the nakedness, which would not let him forget thee!—I bless thee, that thou didst not leave his sin unpunished in this world! These grey hairs, this defaced youth; pain of body and anguish of mind,—these, oh Father! I will accept as tokens of mercy. Th

knowest the strength of temptation, thou knowest the weakness of human nature. Oh, pity and forgive!"

The Pastor rose from his knees; the cold grey light of the morning struggled faintly through the small window; but Achzib had not yet returned. Without waiting for his coming, the Pastor composed as well as he might, the rigidly convulsed limbs, and prepared the body for interment. Near the hut he found a hollow in the bosom of the mountain, scooped by nature as if for a grave; and made strong by Christian love, thither he bore the dead. No man witnessed the deed: and the departing Pastor exclaimed, "I leave thee to man's oblivion, and God's mercy."

Achzib was once more among men, looking for a victim. He heard of wars, and rumours of wars. He heard of a tyrannous ruler, and an oppressed people, and he said, "I will go there."

PHILIP OF MAINE.

PHILIP OF MAINE.

PERSONS.

PHILIP OF MAINE.
THE LORD OF MAINE, HIS FATHER.
ACHZIB, A STRANGER; AFTERWARDS GASTON, THE PATRIOT.
THE LORD OF KRONBERG.
IDA KRONBERG, HIS DAUGHTER.
BERTHA, HER COUSIN.
ARNOLD, HENRY, CONRAD, AND ROLAND, LEADERS OF THE PEOPLE.
MOTHER SCHWARTZ, THE FORGE-WOMAN; JAN, HER SON, AND HANS CLEF, LEADERS OF THE RABBLE.
COUNTS NICHOLAS, SEGBERT, AND FABIAN, ADHERENTS OF LORD KRONBERG.
SOLDIERS, AND OTHER SUBORDINATE CHARACTERS.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

A magnificent room in the Castle of Kronberg.

Enter the LORD OF KRONBERG, *and* PHILIP OF MAINE.

Lord of Kronberg. Good, good! you seek alliance with my house!

Philip of Maine. I do, my lord.

Lord of K. What next, fair sir!

Phil. of M. The honour
Of your fair daughter's hand I ask, nought more.
Lord of K. Nought to maintain her on! no marriage dower—
No broad lands, as a daughter's appanage?
Phil. of M. I asked her, for herself! Broad lands and dower
Came not within my count.
Lord of K. True, true, most true!
The heir of Maine, doth count so little gold,
He wots not of its worth! A wife, young man,
Would add some items to your yearly charges!
Phil. of M. Too well I know the fortunes of our house
Are not, what once they were—scoff not, my lord,
An emperor's daughter has allied with us;
And 't is an ancient, honourable house:
I will retrieve its fortunes! good my lord,
My youth is in its prime—the wars are open—
'T was by the strong right hand, we won our honours!
Lord of K. Wouldst be a wooer, ay? wouldst woo my daughter?
Art worth a sword? canst draw one? canst thou ride?
Canst hunt? canst hold a hawk? canst read? canst write?
I wot not of a roof to your old house,

And yet thou'dst woo—wouldst take a wife, forsooth!
The noble Ida Kronberg! ha! ha! ha!
Phil. of M. My lord, I do not take a taunt unmoved;
Nor do I ask a favour undeserved—
Were your fair daughter, ten times nobler still,
I do but ask my equal!
Lord of K. Upstart fool!
Wouldst match thyself with me!
Phil. of M. Nor have I asked
This honour uninvited! Your own mouth
Swore to vouchsafe whate'er my tongue should crave,
For certain trivial service, at my rating;
At yours,—for loyalty beyond all price!
Lord of K. What! dost thou ask my daughter as the payment
Of such poor service, as a peasant lad
Had done for half a guilder!
Phil. of M. Good, my lord,
If you forget the service, so do I—
But not that we are foes!
Lord of K. Audacious rebel,
Wouldst beard me to my face! I tell thee, traitor,
I have mine eyes upon thee, and thy father—
I know wherefore ye harbour in your walls
The disaffected rabble—why thou comest
To ask alliance with me, then to beard me!

Phil. of M. My lord, this quarrel was not of my seeking.

Lord of K. Too long I have foreborne! I know your views—·

I know what your ambition lusteth after:
Words you can give, where words weigh more than gold;
Can stir up the fierce spirit of the people;
Call them oppressed, poor, wronged, and injured people!

Phil. of M. I came not now as pleader of their cause,
Or, to your face, I 'd tell you, you 're a tyrant!
Think but of those poor workers in the loom,
All dying in your streets, who might have earned
A decent maintenance, save for your edict—
Listen to their demands, they are but just!

Lord of K. Wouldst thou dictate this, that, and the other to me?—
Demand my daughter first, then rule the state?

Phil of M. Who 're they that cry for bread morning and night,
Whom you refuse a morsel? Your poor burghers,
Whose fathers fought for you! They are not stones,
That they should not complain!

Lord of K. 'T is such as you,
With busy meddling, that disturb their souls!

But get thee hence! and let me counsel thee—
Go marry thee, to some poor plodder's daughter
Will keep your house in order, mend thy hose,
And patch the old man's doublet!

Phil. of M. Name him not;
That noble, good old lord, or by the gods,
I shall forget myself!

Lord. of K. Hence with thee, prating fool!
Hence with thee, ere I summon one, whose trade
Is to chastise young insolence like thine!

Phil. of M. A day may come, when we will count for this! [*he goes out.*

Lord of K. And this is he, to whom the people look
As to a new Messiah! Heaven and earth!
Am I to stand girt round with armed men,
And thus be threatened?—What are dungeons for,
But to confine such rebels! Out upon me,
To let such meddlers loose! Marry my daughter!
By Jove, I 'll marry him to the strongest chains
Within my deepest dungeon!
Those old dues,
Which as my vassals they have long withstood,
I will demand, and lay strong hold on them
As forfeit of the soil! Go to, I 'll do it;
And come what will, I 'll crush this house of Maine!
[*he goes out.*

SCENE II.

Ida's apartment—Ida and Bertha together—Bertha has a bunch of lilies of the valley in her hand.

Ida. Nay, blame him not! Why need he shun to ask
My hand in marriage openly? He 's brave,
My father knows he is; and his descent
Is noble as mine own; and this adventure
Hath given such fair advantage to his suit
That he may freely, fearlessly avow it!

Berth. He has avowed, and is a fool for 's pains!
For what must he come here to make a quarrel—
To spoil the daintiest romance that e'er
Gladdened the dull life of a castled lady!
I told thee how 'twould be—I knew my uncle
Better than thou or he did!

Ida. But he swore
That he should have his asking, be 't what 'twould;
And that their ancient hate should be forgotten:—
I know he 'll not gainsay 't!

Berth. He will! he has!
And even now has sworn his utter ruin—
It is one thing to promise while in danger,
But a far different to fulfil in safety.
There is a gulph of hate, wider than ever,
That sunders you, which love can ne'er o'erpass!

Ida. Nay, Bertha, nay, Philip will ne'er desert me!

Berth. Philip hath gone from hence as black as night;—

I never saw rage look more terrible—
I met him on the stair.

Ida. What said he to thee?

Berth. He saw me not, nor spoke, but stalked on, muttering;

And while his eyes flashed fire, he flung these flowers
Under his very feet, as if they were
The reason of his anger.

Ida. Not those flowers!

Berth. Ay, but he did, as if their touch defiled him!

Ida. Well then, it is an augury of ill!
Those flowers were mine, and he knew how I loved them.
I think I never told thee why I loved
The lily of the valley.

Berth. No, sweet cousin.

Ida. I'll tell thee now, it suiteth the occasion.
'Twixt Maine and Kronberg was there ever feud—
Our love seemed almost an unnatural thing;
Our fathers hated, like their sires of old;
And who was strongest, trod the other down,
As we do them. Their line was in decay;

The ancient state had fallen from their house;
Nought but its name remained; my father saw it,
And triumphed in their fall. The Lord of Maine
Hated my father with no lesser hate;
And each decaying vestige of his greatness,
Provoked a curse upon us. Strange it was,
Our fathers hating thus, our mothers loved,
And were each other's dear, though secret friend.
And yet they were so different!
My sweet mother
Was a mild, delicate lady, meek and timid—
She had hard measure dealt her by her husband;
Alas, that I should say 't, and yet 'twas so!
She had no friend to counsel or console her,
Save Philip's mother; and to her she opened
Her inmost, bleeding heart. Oh, how I loved
The Lady of Maine for weeping with my mother!—
She was a Lutheran; a grave, stern woman,
Of a majestic presence; such a one
As would have kept a fortress through a siege,
And died ere she had yielded!—I can see her,
In her black velvet robe, and hooded coif,
Sitting beside my mother, and out-pouring
Her eloquent consolations. I then wondered
What they could mean—I understood them after!
And I remember, from my earliest childhood,
Whene'er my father went unto the chase,

We paid our secret visits;—he ne'er knew
What a great love there was between our mothers.
And what a gloomy place was that of Maine!
Silent, and full of old, decaying things;
Old pictures, and old tarnished furniture.
And I remember roaming up and down
Its gloomy halls with Philip, then a boy;
And all the legends old, he used to tell me,
Of dames, and warrior-lords, and armed ghosts,
Live in my memory yet. Ah, 't was unkind
To fling those flowers away!—But I've not told thee
Wherefore I love those flowers.

Berth. Well, tell me now.

Ida. My gentle mother died,
And I was a bereaved child indeed!—
The Lady of Maine came never to our house,
E'en in my mother's life, and now but seldom
It was my chance to meet her; yet she loved me;
And when we met, from her maternal heart
Poured counsel out, and blessing, which sustained
My orphaned spirit till we met again.
She was my second mother, well beloved!
Philip and I ne'er met for several years;
Until one eve, as I was wandering out,
He stood before me,—not the merry boy,
But the tall, earnest man—so like his mother!

Ah, gentle cousin, a little moment's space;
The glancing of an eye; one spoken word,
Decides our destiny! We had been friends,
Long-parted friends, and with warm hearts we met!—
He brought me flowers—flowers of that very kind,
A token from his mother, who e'en then
Lay at the point of death! Sweet flowers are they,
Which my poor mother loved, and used to gather
From out their garden, for they grew not here.
He knew wherefore I loved them;—and since then
They have been flowers that symbolled love between us.
Ah, was it not unkind to fling them hence?
His mother died—and we two wept together.
But oh, what bliss grew out of that great sorrow!—
Meetings at morn, at noon, at eventide!
What precious hopes of ending that old hate
By our new love! My father knew it not—
Heaven pardon me for that sweet crime of love!

Berth. Why risk so dear a stake upon one throw?

Ida. My father knows his worth, and the strong hold
He has upon the people; 't were unwise,
In these bad times, to make a foe of Philip.

Berth. Hark, hark, my uncle calleth to the chase!

Ida. It is a cheerful voice, I'll not believe
He is an angered, Bertha. Let us go!

Berth. [*aside*] The deepest waters ever are the stillest! [*they go out.*

SCENE III.

A desolate room in the Castle of Maine—the Lord of Maine and a stranger partaking refreshment.

Lord of M. Yes, sir, three centuries back our house held sway
As princes in this land; lineally descended
From the good Emperor Albert:—Three descents
Give us an emperor's daughter. My grandsire,
The child of this alliance, was accounted
The first man of his age: in council great;
A valiant soldier, and a statesman wise.

Strang. That was the celebrated John of Maine.

Lord of M. The same! all Europe knew him; every state
Had cause to bless him, save the single state
Which was his patrimony; small enough,
And yet a fair domain, though all too small
For a soul large as his. Hence 't was involved
In that great debt which dragged it to the earth,
Like the wild vine which winds itself about
Some stately forest-tree, and bows it down;
Upon whose ruin springs a monstrous growth—
A loathed, fungus-growth, poisonous and rank!

Strang. The House of Kronberg, didst thou plainly speak,
Thou 'dst liken to this thing.

Lord of M. I name no names!—
But eat;—thou 'rt freely welcome! This poor land
Hath many weary wanderers who lack bread.
Eat then, my friend; there are not many roofs
That dare give strangers welcome:—'t is coarse fare,
But what my son and I, and our poor household
Find palatable.

Strang. Then, thou hast a son?

Lord of M. A fair young man; some two and twenty years
May be his age; the sole child of my life.
A fair young man, the hope of my grey hairs;
I 've trained him in all arts that fit a noble,
Hawking and hunting, and his weapon's use;
And nature has endowed him like a prince—
I 'd match him against any! Here he comes—
Judge for thyself; I 've travelled in my time,
And know what nobles should be.

Enter PHILIP: *he throws down his cap without noticing the stranger.*

I 've a guest,
Philip; I have a guest, thou see'st him not!

Phil. I crave your pardon, I observed him not!

Lord of M. Where hast thou ridden this morning?—to the chase?

Phil. Am I a child to have my actions questioned?

Enter HILDEBRAND.

Hild. Alas, my lord, the horse you have brought in
All in a foaming sweat, trembling each joint,
Has dropped down dead;—it has been over-ridden—
And 't is our only horse—none have we left;
And 'twas so lean; the carcass will bring nothing!

Phil. The devil take the horse!

Strang. [*aside*] A proper youth!
I' faith, he does the old man's schooling credit!

Lord of M. [*aside to Philip*] 'T is a strange mood is on thee; all unmeet
For stranger eyes to witness! Pray bethink thee,
Thou art no brawler in the public streets.

Phil. I know not what I am!

Lord of M. [*to the Stranger*] Pardon me, friend,
And hold it not uncourteous, if I crave
Your absence.

Strang. Ay, my lord, it is unmeet
A dog should look into a noble's face
If his shoe pinch!

Phil. How! dost thou prate again?

Strang. [*to the Lord of M.*] You did propose that
I should judge myself
Of your son's breeding; 'tis a proper youth!
I 'd match him against any! ha! ha! ha!

Phil. Out with thee, hound! Out, or thou shalt
be gagged!

Strang. Farewell! But, as the ghost spoke unto
Brutus,
I 'll meet with thee again at Philippi!

[*he goes out.*

Lord of M. For shame! He was a poor man, and
a stranger!
Thou hast abashed thy father; and God knows
It was in honest pride I boasted of thee!

Phil. I thank thee not, to make a boast of me!

Lord of M. My son, I cannot understand thy
humour!

Phil. Why could'st not breed me up as poor men
are?
Teach me to cringe, to stoop, and humbly beg?
Why could'st not put a hatchet in my hand,
And train my will to use it? What am I?
Noble! and yet who may not match with nobles!

Lord of M. What, hast thou at a tourney ridden
again,
And been insulted for thy poverty—
Again been jeered at for a faded doublet?

Phil. No!

Lord of M. Then pray what *is* this arrant foolery?

Phil. If thou will hear it—hear it! I have been
To ask Lord Kronberg's daughter's hand in marriage!

Lord of M. Thou ask the Lord of Kronberg's daughter's hand!
Good heavens preserve me! Went and bowed thyself
Unto that hateful tyrant—asked his daughter!

Phil. Well, what of that? Why need'st thou chafe it o'er
As if 'twere strange that I should love a woman?

Lord of M. Were there no women in the world but her—
That thou must go and be a cringing fool
To that man of all others!

Phil. And that man
Shall bow himself to me, and humbly sue
That I would wed his daughter! and by heaven
I will not wed her then! I'll have revenge!

Lord of M. Peace with these hectoring threats, thou boasting fool!
What can he do that's poor and powerless?

Phil. Thou shouldst have made me base; have crushed my spirit,
And shaped me out some humbler path to tread!

Lord of M. I never bade thee ask a wife from Kronberg,
And bow thyself to him, that he might spurn thee!
Thou hast abased thyself, and me in thee;
Thou art a servile dog, and I could beat thee!

Phil. Stand back, old man!—I'm in no mood of patience—
Stand back, my father, and provoke me not!

[*he goes out.*

Lord of M. This was the maddest folly e'er I heard of!
He ask the hand of haughty Kronberg's daughter!
Shew to that hated house our poverty!
Present himself a wooer in that garb!
Ride on that starveling jade to ask a wife
From the proud line of Kronberg!

Enter HILDEBRAND.

Hild. Good, my lord,
Here have I brought the poor beast's shoes. They 'll make
A little towards her price. May 't please you, sir,
To walk to the court yard?

[*he goes out.*

Lord of M. Ay, the poor beast!
And this disaster comes of that fool's wooing;

[*he follows Hildebrand.*

SCENE IV.

Several days afterwards—an unfrequented road near the city—Evening.

Enter the STRANGER, *dressed in the costume of the country, as* GASTON THE PATRIOT.

I owe him payment for his railing words!
And with full interest will I pay him back
Every indignity! He shall be mine—
Body and soul, in life and death, be mine!
I'll work him to my purpose; for in him
Lie elements of ruin—pride, ambition,
And hatred and revenge, glossed o'er or hidden
By a fair shew of patriotic virtues—
The very man to be the people's idol!

Enter PHILIP.

But here he comes! Welcome, young heir of Maine;
My musings were of thee!

Phil. And what of me?

Art thou not he that with a braggart's threat
Defied me heretofore?

Gast. Thy father's guest.

I owe thee grateful thanks; but unto thee,
The patriot-saviour, I owe humble service!

Phil. I am not used to service—none I need!

Gast. But I will serve thee as thou wott'st not of—
Give thee revenge on him thy soul has cursed!
Phil. Did I not call thee braggart? Let me go!
Gast. Nay, then against thy will I'll serve thee—
listen!
Like thee, I 've sworn a patriot's deep revenge
Upon the house of Kronberg—wherefore so,
It matters not, for whom has he not wronged?
And 'tis not I alone have sworn revenge,
Nor thou and I—nor twenty more than us—
But twenty times a thousand in this league
Are banded heart and hand!
Phil. [*aside*] Yet in despite
Of my good angel I must listen to him!
Gast. Hear'st thou me?
Phil. I do, what say'st thou farther?
Gast. Thou hast dwelt in these sequestered glens
of Maine,
And hast not known that the great earth went round!
Get thee among the people; to the herds
In the remotest dells, and hear them talk;
They are more of men than thou!
Phil. In words, perhaps.
Gast. Stand by the vine-dressers upon the hills,
And they will be thy teachers! Ask the mothers,
The earliest words her lisping boy shall speak,
And she will tell thee, curses on the oppressor!

If these arouse thee not, go to the city,
And hear the meagre workman at his loom—
There are who call his muttered musings treason!
Phil. All this I know—I know they curse the tyrant,
And they have need. But how know'st thou they league
Together for revolt?
Gast. I am of them!
Have bound myself with them—have sworn with them,
To see the downfall of the house of Kronberg!
Hast thou a heart to do as thou hast sworn,
The path is open to thee; fortune offers
A golden opportunity; and thou,
If thou art the generous patriot that thou seem'st,
May'st make thy name as great as that of Brutus—
Be Father and Preserver of the people!
Phil. By lawful right, the lordship is our own.
Gast. The people love you, call you lord already!
Phil. Hark ye, my friend, can you gain me access
To these caballing spirits in the city?
Gast. Most joyfully! Give me your hand, brave sir;
You are the man on whom all hearts are set!
Phil. Let us begone!
Gast. No moment let us lose!
[*they go off together.*

SCENE V.

A large vaulted room, lighted by an iron lamp — Gaston, Arnold, Henry, Conrad, and three soldiers, sitting round a table, at the head of which is a vacant seat.

Gast. 'T is good to see you here! What are your tidings?

Con. Seven hundred men with me, true as the ore
We dig from out the mines, have ta'en the oath;
Men brawny as myself—look at my arms!
We are not babes in muscle; we can deal
Blows that require no second!

Gast. Are ye armed?

Con. The half of us are armed! We've stinted us
Of food—have lived like dogs, we and our children,
To hoard the means that might obtain us arms!

Rol. Devoted men! Antiquity can boast
No truer hearts than yours!

Arn. I met, last night,
In the deep glen of Sarni, fifteen men,
Sent out from fifteen districts in the hills,
To swear to us allegiance. Ye may count
Upon five hundred men, both young and old,
Serfs of the soil, who have been trampled on
Till, like the wounded adder, they turn round

And bite the foot that galls them! There are none
Truer than these stout children of the soil!
They 'll do the cause good service; and for arms,
Have sworn to turn the sickle and the scythe
To weapons, that shall mow a harvest down,
Redder and richer than the fields afford!

Gast. 'T is well! who now is spokesman for the army?

Soldier. All, all are disaffected, as ye know,
And murmur for their long arrears of pay!
And all, excepting four old companies,
Whom Kronberg by his partial favour won,
And over whom command Segbert and Nicholas,
Each several man is yours; and ye may count
Upon ten thousand good and trusty swords,
Wielded by hands omnipotent as death.

Rol. 'T is the ten thousand of the Grecian story!
The invincible ten thousand!

Gast. Brave, bold hearts!
Soldiers of freedom, welcome to the cause!
And now I scarce need say, that in the city
Five thousand more are leagued unto our band,
Each with his arms, which as his household gods
Make his hearth Freedom's altar!
All is ready,
Saving the most important part of all,

The appointment, time and place, and naming wisely
A general leader of the several bands.

The door suddenly opens, and HANS CLEF, *an artificer, rushes in.*

Hans. If you have tears within your eyes, weep them;
If you have human hearts, let them drop blood—
Oh sirs, I 've seen the saddest, saddest sight!

Several voices. What hast thou seen? Say quickly what thou mean'st!

Hans. They tore him from his house; his wife e'en now
Upon her bed of death—his little children
Filling the air with their most piteous voices!

Gast. Whom speak ye of?

Hans. He had been here, even now,
But that he staid to watch his dying wife!
They heard that he had arms—they searched her bed—
They cast her on the floor, a dying woman;
And in the wretched straw whereon she lay
They found his arms! Oh sirs, they found his arms!

Gast. Pr'ythee whose arms?

Hans. I told ye, my poor brother's!—
I'll tell ye more—they racked him on the wheel,

And he a feeble man, a child in frame—
He 's dead! I saw him die, with mine own eyes!
All. Betrayed he aught?
Hans. How dare ye ask me that!
Oh I could tear out every tongue that asks
If Wilhelm were a traitor!
Henry. Poor, brave man!
Hans. Why sit ye here, looking like senseless stones?
Oh! had ye seen that dying woman's face;
Had ye but heard those little children's wail;
Had ye but seen that steadfast patriot die—
Ye would have sworn, by heaven, and earth, and hell,
To be their good avengers—
All. We do swear!
Gast. Ye swear—by heaven, and earth, and hell, ye swear
To bring down tenfold vengeance for the blood
Of this brave man; and for his children's tears;
And for the groan of his poor dying wife—
Ye swear?
All. We do!
Gast. So help ye gods and men,
As ye do keep your oath!
All. Amen, amen!
Hans. You have not bound yourself!
Gast. I will do mo

Than utter empty words! will give you him
Who shall accomplish for you your revenge!

[*he goes out, and returns leading in Philip of Maine.*

Know ye this man, my friends?

All. We know him well,
We love him well! 'T is the good heir of Maine!

Gast. Ye know that they of right possess the land.

Rol. The little children know 't!—thus says the legend,

"Gold and gain, sun and rain,
Came with Maine; and will again!"

Gast. Ye know how they have suffered, like yourselves—
Their deadliest foe is the cold tyrant Kronberg!

Henry. Ay, they have suffered sore—and this good lord—

Con. He saved my aged father from the gallows!

Henry. 'T was he, that in my quarrel drew his sword—
When I defied that infamous collector
To cross my threshold—'t is a well-known story!

Arn. 'T was he that fed, and clothed, and kept in shelter—

Phil. Peace! peace! I came not here to crave your thanks.

This was but common service—I 'll do more,
I will make one with you in your great cause!

Henry. God bless you! you were ever the poor man's friend!

All. Success will then be sure! God save you sir.

Phil. Dear friends and honest, I am one with you.
Are ye poor? so am I! Are ye despised,
And trampled on? so have I been my life long!
Do you fare hard? so have I fared from boyhood!
Are your hands hardened with your daily toil?
Look ye at mine! are these a noble's hands,
Fair as a woman's, decked with costly jewels,
Each one of which would feed and clothe your households?
No—I must till the earth, plough, work in mines,
Do any servile labour to support me
And my good aged father, and receive
With humble thanks the pittance of my toil;
So are we fallen, through the proud oppressor
That fattens on our blood! Shall it be thus—
Thus shall we toil, and groan?
No, no! my friends,
Thanks to brave men like you, we will be free!
We will assert our human dignity,—
Our birth-right as free men! Thank you, my friends,
That you have thus decreed; for in my lone,
And solitary home I made my vow—

The downfall of the tyrant! yet to it
There was no witness, save the heavens above.
Thinking upon your wrongs, I wept alone;
Alone I made my prayer, when gracious heaven,
Compassionating its oppressed children,
Brought, as by chance, this brave man in my way,
Even when the cursed tyrant had oppressed me
Beyond my soul's endurance.—Why, do ye ask?
Because I was like you—like you, brave men,
Because I was a poor man! Noble hearts,
Will ye have me a brother?

All. We will, we will!

Gast. And my beloved sons, I, who have been
To this good cause a father, and have chosen
This young man for my son, name him your leader,
Speak, do ye like the choice?

All. We do, we do!

Henry. Not for our oath's sake to abide thy choice
Shall he be chose! 'T is we elect him leader!

All. We do, we do! 'T is we elect him leader!

Gast. My son, these men are brave, true men and brave,
Be worthy of their choice! Ye righteous hearts—
Ye poor men who are crushed—ye noble spirits,
Hungering and thirsting after truth and justice,
Look on this man! He will be as a god,—

Maintain your upright cause and crush the tyrant.
Join hands, and take an oath of fealty to him!

Phil. Brethren, ye shall not take an oath to me
Blindly, and without knowing what ye swear for!
It is for the down-hurling of the tyrant;
For the upholding right—to give the poor
The labour of his hands.—It is to open,
And to dispense from coffers ye have filled;
To feed the hungry and to clothe the naked—
To make just law the guardian of the people;
And give the people their just rights as men!
It is for this, that I will be your leader—
Are ye content?

All. A thousand times content!

[*they join hands.*

Gast. Ye swear, as the deputed agents of the cause,
To serve both night and day this leal, good man,
Philip of Maine, whom ye have chosen leader!

All. So heaven support us as we keep the oath!

ACT II. — SCENE I.

Several days afterwards—a small apartment in the Castle of Maine; the Lord of Maine, with the Bible before him.

And all these things He suffered for our sakes—
The man without a sin, for sinners' sakes!

Reviled on, and he answered not again;
Smitten, and he smote not, though had he willed it,
Myriads of angels would have ta'en his part!
A man of sorrows, and with grief acquainted,
Yet patient as the lamb before its shearers;—
And this the Son of God! higher than all power,
Glory, or domination of the earth!
More royal than a king—than saints more holy,
Though born among the lowly of the world—
The son of a poor carpenter; the friend
Of humble fishermen, and simple women!—
What matters it where our poor lives wear out;
Whether in palaces enrobed in purple,
Or lying down in huts on wretched straw,
With the ashamed outcasts of the earth?
What matters it in the great day of count?
Saving that in the balance of the oppressed,
Then will be made a reckoning for his wrongs.
Enough, I will not murmur—I will leave
My righteous cause in the great Judge's hands!

Enter HILDEBRAND.

Bringest thou any tidings of my son?

Hild. My lord, as I was standing near the ford,
One muffled in his cloak passed by me twice,
Looking into my face as if to question
My countenance: "Good friend," said I,

" What dost thou need of me?" " Art Hildebrand?"
He asked. " And if I were, what then?" said I.
" I 've tidings for thy master," he rejoined,
And forthwith drew this writing from his breast,
And bade me give it you.

Lord of M. Thanks, my good servant.

[*Hildebrand goes out.*

Lord of M. [*reads*] " Have not a fear for me,
I shall be heard of
Anon, in otherwise than heretofore!"
Thank God, he 's free! It is not as I feared,
That he had fallen into cruel hands—
My son is safe! Now welcome evil fortune,
Since it will crush me singly!

Enter HILDEBRAND, *with an old sword drawn.*

Hild. Oh my master,
A dozen horsemen now are at the gate;
They bear the cognizance of Kronberg's house.

Lord of M. Admit them; I am ready!

Hild. No, my master,
They shall not take you thus! The gates are barred,
And they shall beat them down to gain admittance;
And they shall pass my body to win yours!

[*he fastens the door and windows, and barricades them with furniture.*

Lord of M. These are but poor defences!

Hild. I will prove them!
Whate'er is yours shall do good service for you!
Lord of M. But spare thyself, good Hildebrand!
Hild. My lord,
Have I been in your service seventy years;
Eaten of your bread, and drunken of your cup;
Been cherished on your hearth; been called your friend,
But to desert you at the neediest time?

[*a loud battering is heard at the gates.*

Lord of M. Nay then, I'll do my best.

[*he arms himself.*

Hild. Oh! would my lord,
I had a young man's vigour in my arm;
Would I were such as when by Sarni's stream
I stood, upon the eve of Childermas,
And saved a drowning man!
Lord of M. The lord of Kronberg!
Ah, Hildebrand! he has forgot that service.
Hild. My lord, he soon forgot it! Scarce a month
After that night, I crossed him in the chase,
And, 'cause I could not answer to his question
Of "which way went the boar?" his savage hound
Was set to tear my flesh! In vain I cried,
"I am poor Hildebrand, who saved your life!"
He passed me with a curse! Oh for the strength
I wasted on the eve of Childermas!

Lord of M. The poor man hath his evil in this life,
His reckoning in the next!

[*the gates give way with a loud crash.*

Hild. Curse that old wood!
Now, my dear master, back, this is my place!

[*he stations himself at the door; loud voices and heavy footsteps are heard without, which then pass off in the distance.*

Hild. They 've lost the scent! Oh, my most excellent master,
If man's good deeds have any worth with heaven,
Then should these sacred walls be kept from ruin—
Would that our Lutheran faith, like theirs of Rome,
Gave us kind saints to take our house's quarrel!

Lord of M. Peace, peace, good friend, I hear approaching voices.

1*st Voice.* [*outside*] Here hides the ancient fox; come, now unearth him!

2*nd Voice.* This is the only habitable corner!

1*st Voice.* Give 's here the straw and matches, by my troth
We 'll serve them as the hornet, burn them out!

Hild. The dogs! they 'll burn us out!

Lord of M. Hist, Hildebrand!

Hild. Let 's issue forth, my lord, and do our best!

Lord of M. Let us go forth; ours is a righteous cause!

But first, my aged servant, take a blessing
From thine old master.

Hild. [*kneeling*] My gracious lord,
May every power in heaven defend you through it!

[*the flames burst into the chamber. Hildebrand and the Lord of Maine rush out with drawn swords; the men close upon them, and bear off the Lord of Maine, leaving Hildebrand wounded among the burning ruins.*

SCENE II.

Night—a rocky glen, at the entrance of a lonesome mining village—a crowd of men, women and children collected together—Philip of Maine among them, unnoticed — Mother Schwartz stands forward — meteors and northern lights are seen crossing the sky.

Man. These signs are plain enough!

Mother S. I saw, myself,
Two armies from the north and south o' the sky
Come up like hissing dragons; and the heavens
The while were red as blood!

Man. And bloody banners,
And fiery swords and spears, like flickering lightning,
Are thicker set than stars!

Old Man. Wherefore these signs?

I'll tell ye—to arouse ye to repentance!
Banners, and swords, and shields, to teach that ye
Are soldiers of a holy militant church;
Rivers of blood, to shew the blood of Christ;
Groanings and awful sighings, to recall
The death on the cross; and moans and hissings wild—

Mother S. Peace, driveller, hold your peace!

2nd Man. No, no; these signs,
These awful, fiery signs, have other meanings—
Tokens of wrath, to shew the end o' the world
Is now at hand!

Philip of M. I see these diverse sights
Of comets and wild meteors in the air;
And streaming fires, which from the northern pole
Cast o'er the sky this wild horrific glare;
But what of these, my friends?
These things are tokens,
Sent to the great and powerful of the earth
To shake their souls! High heaven is wroth with them!

Mother S. Thou art a wise man! I do read these things
As thou. But hark! here comes the Innocent—
The poor dumb innocent that now doth speak—
Such wonders are abroad!

1st Man. He has work to do!
He is sent forth in these bad, awful times
For some great meaning!
Mother S. Nothing has been done,
Fearful or good, which he has not foretold—
There is a god or else a devil in him!
2nd Man. Hist, hist! he comes, and soon he will begin!
'T is thus he rocks his body to and fro,
When the fit 's on him!

[*the crowd gives way, and the Innocent enters, tossing his arms wildly, and speaking.*

Look, they 're coming from the clouds!
Thousands, thousands; crowds on crowds!
Banners streaming; bright swords flashing—
Onward, onward dashing, crashing!
Lo, they meet! The weak are strong!
Right is mightier now than wrong—
Drive the bloody ploughshare deep;
Strike the sickle in and reap!
Weapons not of earth they wield—
'T is a crimson harvest-field!
Warrior, to the fight away!
This is the appointed day!
Cowards, do ye quake with fear?
Up, the man of might is here!

Where is he? the man of might?
Give him—give him to my sight!
I have seen him in my sleep—
Heard him in the silence deep—
Now I know by signs of fear
That the man of might is here!
Hence! ye hide him from my view—
[*he parts the crowd, and looks round him.*
Where art thou, O warrior true?
Ha! I see thee! thou art he!
Get thee hence to victory.
[*he falls back insensible, at Philip's feet.*

Many voices. What wonder's this?

Mother S. Thou art the man he aimed at.

Others. Say, who art thou?

Philip. Philip of Maine, I am.

All. Philip of Maine! our leader, Philip of Maine!

Mother S. Whom heaven has sanctioned by this miracle!

All. It has, it has!

Mother S. Hurrah for Philip of Maine!

All. Hurrah for Philip of Maine!

Enter JAN SCHWARTZ, *and many* FORGEMEN, *in great haste.*

Jan S. How! stand ye here, and do not see the burning?

Many voices. Where, where?

Jan S. In the east—behold ye not the light
Crimson as blood? 'Tis the old house of Maine
That is a-burning!

Philip. What, the Castle of Maine!

Jan S. Ay, and the ancient lord is carried off
To Kronberg's dungeons; and a price is set
On his son's head—they say that Kronberg fears him!
Lord, what a burning 'tis! the old dry timber
Blazes like touchwood!

Philip. Carried to the dungeons!

Jan S. And the grand cedar floors smell like frankincense—
I 'll warrant them they cost a world o' money!

Philip. This shall but kindle fiercer, bloodier vengeance!

Jan S. And poor old Hildebrand has been dug out!
He fought for his master, and was sorely wounded;
The burning walls fell on him—he was dead—
Mangled, and black with blood and masking smoke.

Philip. There shall be a reckoning for that old man's life!

Enter CONRAD, *and other miners.*

See you that bloody beacon in the east?

Conrad. I do! It is a beacon that will rouse

Thousands of sleeping hearts, which, but for that
Would have slept on! The forest is aroused;
The cry is "Vengeance, and the Lord of Maine!"

Mother S. And there has blood been shed—I know there has!

I can smell blood, even as the raven can!

Conrad. In the black glen we have left seven bodies—

Bloodhounds were they, upon our leader's scent;
Making sure count of Kronberg's thousand pieces!

Philip. Thanks for this trusty service, gallant friends!

Many voices. We owe you more!

Mother S. [*aside*] I love the smell of blood!

Philip. Now, friends, unto your homes! An hour will come
When I shall need your bravest energies—
Of that you shall have warning; and till then,
Farewell!

Many voices. Nay, we will with you, even now;
Will be your guard!

Others. And we will to the burning.

[*they all disperse.*

SCENE III.

Some evenings afterwards—three men sitting round a fire in a cave, opening upon broken ground.

1*st Man.* It is a general out-break. No faint impulse,
Threatening one moment, and next moment quelled;
Where'er ye go, people are under arms.

2*d Man.* As I this morn, stood on the wooded heights,
O'erlooking the wild rocky pass of Forges,
Three thousand peasants, armed in rustic fashion,
Shouldering their scythes, their reaping hooks, and forks,
Passed onward in firm file, like veteran soldiers!
That will be done anon, will find no healing,
Save in the tyrant's blood.

1*st Man.* The forest mines
Have sent their thousands forth; in dens and caves
They wait the appointed signal.

3*d Man.* Kronberg sleeps,
The while Destruction gathers up itself,
To crush him with its concentrated force.
But heaven confounds whom it foredooms to ruin!—
Philip and Gaston 'neath the castle gates,
Within the very hearing of the soldiers

That man the walls, call on them to arise,
To crush the heedless tyrant, and be free!

2d Man. Gaston I do not like. These strange adventurers
Start up in troublous times, as crawling things
Spring forth from falling ruins into day.
Philip is ours—we know him root and branch;
And when his house had power, the times were better;
An it please heaven to give them head again,
I'll help him heart and hand.

1st Man. He has all hearts,—
And hands will go with hearts—have gone already!
It was but three morns since I saw him stand
In the full market-place, and raise his voice,
Like the tremendous angel that foretold
The end of time!

2d Man. His voice is like a trumpet!
Never heard I so rich, so full a voice—
I've seen men moved when but its tones were heard.

1st Man. Thus was it then!—They that were cold at first,
Or fixedly determined 'gainst his purpose,
Kindled to hear his glowing exhortation.
Thousands on thousands gathered round about,
Wedged close, like a thick swarm of summer bees;
Till tens of thousands seemed to occupy
A space as many hundreds might have filled;

And then, even like unto a living body
Swayed by the great pulsations of one heart,
They moved together in their strong excitements
Of joy or rage, as move the heavy waves
Of a deep, rolling sea!

2d Man. He will be great!—
And were he sundered from that foreign patriot,
As all good men desire, might bless the state
By his ascendance o'er the tyrant's fall.

1st Man. Trust me, a mighty engine is at work,
To undermine rock-rooted tyranny,—
And I bless God that we shall be free-men,
As did each tongue of those assembled thousands,
Until the morning-heavens gave back the shout—
And yet each man returned unto his home
Without impediment!

2d Man. They might not now,
For now he is awake; and terrible
Has his awakening been! The bloody rack
Doth every hour its work; and armed bands
Scour through the silenced streets, or trample down
Whoever dare oppose them—men or women,
Or little helpless children—and make search
In the house of each suspected citizen.

1st Man. Poor impotence of power!—where one is with him,
A thousand are against him!

A wild crowd of people come up.

People. God save Philip!
Hurrah for the Deliverer! Who 's for Philip?

1*st Man.* What's this about?

Man of the crowd. Philip has set us free!
The damned collector stripped us, dead and living:
The body on the bier —the new-made bride—
The bread from out our little children's hands—
We were the wretchedest people 'neath the sun!

Another Man. Philip stepped up, and seizing the collector,
Dealt him a wound in 's body that cut short
His pillaging!

Another Man. And ripping up his bags,
Poured out the gold, and chucked it here and there
Among our children. "Take it all," said he;
And gold flew wide, like yellow leaves in autumn.
We 'll have no more collectors! God save Philip!
Who is for him? We 'll have no lord but Philip!

Enter FORGEMEN, *hurriedly.*

Forgeman. Have ye not heard the news o' th' victory?

2*d Man.* What victory?

Forgeman. Philip has got the day!

A battle has been fought i' th' fields of Forges;
And Philip marches to encamp at Sarni,
At the head of twenty thousand!

People. God save Philip!

Forgeman. Who 's for the Conqueror let him follow me!

[*he runs forward.*

People. We 'll follow—that we will!

3d Man. Let 's take the oath
To this brave leader in the cause of freedom;—
Let 's to the camp at Sarni!

[*they all follow.*

SCENE IV.

A street in the city.

Enter a MAN, *crying papers.*

Man. Here is a full and true account of the wonderful and awful prophecy delivered by one who rose from the dead; in which is plainly foretold the strange and solemn events which are coming upon the earth; to which is added, the downfal of pride, and a clear explanation of the terrible and portentous signs and tokens in the sky, written by the learned Dr. Astreus: together with an account of sundry wonders and mysterious visitations which were witnessed in many places of this state. All which are explained with

reference to things which are about coming to pass. "He that runneth may read."

Many voices. Give us one! Here 's money, give us one!

[*the man distributes his papers, and then goes forward.*

Another MAN *rushes in.*

Off with ye, every one of you! off, off,
A troop is coming down!

[*they all disappear.*

Soldiers ride through the street with swords drawn. After a short time another crowd enters, in the midst of which is the INNOCENT. MOTHER SCHWARTZ *and* HANS CLEF *stand forward.*

Hans Clef. By Jove, there 'd be a hubbub, were he heard
In yonder castle!

Mother S. Ay, he shall be heard,—
By every power of vengeance shall be heard!
Now hist again!

Innocent. Man of pride, the hour is near,
Thou shalt bow thyself in fear;
Thou shalt gnash thy teeth in rage;
Thou shalt curse thy drooping age—
Thou shalt fall, and thou shalt die!

Mother S. We know of whom he speaks!

Hans Clef. He is convulsed!—
Ah no, he speaks again!

Innocent. Cometh night upon the noon?
Mighty, art thou fallen so soon?
Let me close mine eyes, I see
Nought but coming misery!
Hotly rolls the crimson flood!
See ye not these streets run blood?—
Death is stalking up and down
Through this wailing, midnight town.
Hark! what yells are in the air—
See ye not the red fire's glare?
Midnight flames are bursting there—
What comes next? despair! despair!
Woe! woe! woe!—The day is done;
Mighty, art thou fallen so soon!

[*he sinks down insensible.*

1*st Man.* Most sorrowful! most strange!

Mother S. 'T is but a madman!

2*d Man.* Dark sayings are these all!

Innocent. [*starting up.*] They are here! I feel their hands!
Off! I brook not gyves nor bands!
Down the silent, echoing street,
Hark! I hear their coming feet!

[*he gives a spring upward, and is seized by soldiers.*

Mother S. Unhand him, cut-throats!

[*all the people struggle to rescue him; he is wounded and borne off.*

Hans Clef. This is his blood! By heaven it is his blood!

[*he dips a handkerchief in it, which he fastens to his staff, and waves over his head.*

Mother S. Rally around the standard! To the castle!
Follow, and let us rescue him!

[*they all hurry off.*

ACT III.—SCENE I.

A dungeon in the Castle of Kronberg—the Lord of Maine sitting on straw.

Enter IDA KRONBERG, *with fine bread, a flask of wine and a lamp.*

Lord of M. What messenger of mercy may'st thou be,
That daily visitest this dreary cell,
And ministerest kind comfort to my need?

Ida. [*placing the viands before him*] Eat, drink, my lord, for you will need refreshment!

Lord of M. I would believe thou wert some blessed saint,
Did I not see thy weak and trembling frame,
And hear thy voice so full of human sorrow!

Ida. Eat, drink, old man, waste not the time in words!—
Meantime I will compose my mind to speak
That which requireth more than human strength.
My lord, you have a son!

Lord of M. Heaven grant I have! yet not in bonds like me—
My years are well nigh full—his years are few,
Say not he is in bonds!

Ida. Your son is free—
Three leagues from this he lieth with his army!

Lord of M. *His* army—thou mistak'st! Thou canst not mean
Philip of Maine!

Ida. The very same, I mean!
And now he lieth on the plain of Sarni
With a confederate host, each hour increasing,
Till tens of thousands are its smallest number.—
Two-thirds the army, and all mutinous spirits;
Miners and artizans, herdmen and serfs,
Nay, the whole land, if rumour speaketh truly,
Banded together for our house's ruin!

Lord of M. Ha! is it so? Scarce forty days have passed
Since he was friendless and of no account!
But, gracious lady, on; thy words are wondrous.
Ida. Like the fierce torrent of a mountain river,
Swoln by the night-thaw of a winter's snow,
So has this mutinous faction suddenly
Sprung into being, so it threatens death!—
Few are the burghers who have not thrown off
Their old allegiance—all declare for Philip!
The castle is blockaded. In our walls
The few leal men who have maintained their oath
Entered last night. To-morrow, it is rumoured,
The enemy will make their great attack.
Oh! 't is a bloody oath that they have sworn—
A fearful, bloody oath!
Lord of M. They have great cause!
Ida. I am a woman, and dare not attempt
To judge these weighty matters.
Lord of M. But proceed!
Ida. Here all is preparation for defence.
The walls are manned with veterans; arms are furnished;
Lord Kronberg swears to part with life, ere right.
'T will be a bloody contest! My poor heart
Droops with prophetic feeling of great woe!
Lord of M. What would'st thou have of me?

Ida. Ah, I forgot—
How shall I tell thee that?—I am a traitor!
Lord of M. A traitor! nay!
Ida. I am Lord Kronberg's daughter!
Lord of M. Art thou Lord Kronberg's daughter?
Ida. Thou must hence—
Must to thy son, and counsel him to temper
Vengeance with mercy. When he knows thee safe,
Perchance he may withdraw. And more than this,
Flee for thy life! A gibbet is erected,
Thou'll see it in the moonlight, on the walls;
There 't was my father's order to convey thee,
A terror to the foe, when day should break;—
And woman as I am, weak, timid woman,
I dare oppose my judgment unto his;
He shall not stain his name—a noble name,
By basely taking life from such as thou—
An old and unoffending nobleman!
Hence to thy son! and, friend, remember this,
Thou hast had mercy, and be thou for us
An angel of sweet mercy!
Lord of M. Gracious lady,
With joy, I 'll do thy bidding with my son!
Ida. Now follow!
Lord of M. [*aside*] No marvel 't is he loved her!
[*she unbars the door, and they go out softly together.*

SCENE II.

Ida's chamber—Ida arranging flowers.

It was a gentle notion in old times,
When books were few, and ladies could not read,
To give to flowers sweet names—sweet names that told
As much as a whole book of poetry.
The heart's-ease;—I could look for half a day
Upon this flower, and shape in fancy out
Full twenty different tales of love and sorrow
That gave this gentle name! Would I could find in't
That sovereign'st balm of all!

Enter BERTHA, *with a banner in her hand.*

Bertha. My noble cousin,
Mounts not thy blood to see this gallant standard!
Many a brave field has seen this crimson banner—
A field of noble foes—then waved it well!
Alas! that it must spread its silken breadth
To yon base herd, 'gainst whom the raven's wing,
Flapping above the blasted gibbet-tree,
Had been a fitter banner!

Ida. They are men—
And my heart tells me, sorely injured men—
Power is oppression!

Bertha. Creatures of the earth,
Made to be trodden on! Poor beasts of burden,
Formed for submission; and they now rise up
And ask their rights as men—faugh! look at them,
They are but brutes! Down with them to the dust,
And make them eat of it!

Ida. Nay, gentle cousin,
Their cause *was* just, heaven grant they shame it not!
Their sole demand was bread, bread for their children—
Was 't more than right?—I tell thee, dearest Bertha,
Power is a dangerous engine in man's hand.
My noble father used it as a scourge,
So will these men—yet while I shrink with dread,
I own their cause was just!

Bertha. Ida, for shame!
Thou would'st be lady-leader of this rabble—
Thou would'st be wife to Philip!—Shame on thee!
Thus should not speak Lord Kronberg's noble daughter—
It is a monstrous sin to love that man!

Ida. Thou dost misjudge me—I regard their cause
Separate from him.

Bertha. I'd tear my wilful heart
From out my breast, if it were such a traitor!

Ida. I am Lord Kronberg's daughter; and our house
Brooks not reproach.

Enter LORD KRONBERG.

Lord of K. What eager words are these?

Bertha. Uncle, behold this banner! 'T is not heavy!

Grant me to hold it on its post to-morrow,—
I will not flinch—by your good name, I will not!

Lord of K. Nay, nay, my pretty niece, thou shalt not risk
Thy life before the weapons of those caitiffs!—
But now, my Ida, why art downcast thus?
Fear not, my child, to-morrow thou shalt see
The Lord of Kronberg lord in his own land!

[*a knock is heard at the door.*

Who knocks there?

Enter SENESCHAL.

Sene. He 's 'scaped, my lord!—
He is not in the dungeon—he has 'scaped!

Lord of K. Escaped! Then there are traitors in these walls!
Try on the rack the soldiers who were taken
In act to fly unto the enemy!

Ida. My father, no!—these men are innocent—
'T was I who gave him freedom!

Lord of K. Peace, my daughter
Thou 'rt raving! Bertha, take her to her chamber.

Ida. I am not raving—I am calm as thou !—
Father, I gave that old man liberty—
I would not let thy noble name be stained
With innocent blood !

Lord of K. If thou didst dare unlock
That dungeon door, my curse light on thee, traitor !

Ida. Nay, curse me not,—dear father, curse me not !

Lord of K. Hence with her to the dungeon ! she's a traitor !

Sene. My good lord, no ! She is your child, my lord !

Bertha. [*clasping her arms about her*] Off, off ! you shall not lay your hands upon her.

[*she supports her into an inner room.*

Lord of K. Traitors of mine own blood ! Fetch out the prisoners,
And hang them all—and that vile prating idiot !
But I 'll trust none of ye ! I 'll see it done !

[*he goes out with the Seneschal.*

SCENE III.

Seven days afterwards—the same apartment—Ida reclines on a couch.

The name of Ida Kronberg will go down
As of a rebel traitor—as one leagued

Against her father in the desperate strife
Wherein, perchance, his life may be the forfeit.
Oh Thou, who in thy righteous hand dost hold
The lives of all thy creatures, guard, I pray,
My father through the conflict! Be his shield,
And his sufficient help! If life thou needest,
Take my poor life, a sacrifice for his—
I would resign my breath into thy hands—
My cause unto thy judgment—which is just!

Enter BERTHA, *and* COUNT FABIAN.

Bertha. Ha! traitor, did he say? Believe me, Count,
The tumult of the hour hath mazed his brain—
Daughter he meant, his most beloved daughter!
Ida, Count Fabian brings us heavy news—
The outer walls are taken—and the attack
Hath now commenced upon the inner fortress;
But my most noble uncle, full of kindness,
Hath sent this brave young Count to be our guard!

Ida. He could not grant a trustier, braver friend!
Count, in the good greenwood thou 'st been our guard—
Heaven knows if we shall take those sports again!

Fab. I murmured when I heard my good lord's orders,

For he most strangely worded his command,—
Methought he spoke of gaoler—not defender!

Bertha. I told you, Count, my uncle's brain is mazed.

He does not mean that she and I are traitors.

Ida. [*aside*] Oh, most unkind, to still believe me traitor—

shut his heart in such a time as this!—
't is not meet Count Fabian see me weep—
me retire into the inner chamber!

Bertha. I will go with thee.

[*they go into the inner room.*

Fab. She 's a noble lady!
would not draw his sword for such a one?
't is for her, they say, the war is waged—
gle-handed man, I 'd face, myself,
ndred foes were she the victor's guerdon!
let me think—suppose he win the day,
se he force the castle, and take prisoner
oble sire—which is impossible!
oner die than she should be his prisoner;—
r the supposition's sake—I 'd fly
ry court in Europe, and demand
or the noblest, fairest, best of ladies;
abia's duke would be our earliest helper—
w he has an eye upon this lordship;

And is beside, a gallant, generous soldier!

[*a loud clamour of assault and defence is heard.*

But how now! What is this? Oh, but to stand
Upon the bulwarks! Curse these four strait walls!

[*he mounts to the window.*

Ah! what a stirring sight! Yonder is Philip,
Known by the bloody hand upon the banner;
His is a soldier's bearing—would to heaven
It was a gallant cause for which he strove!

Re-enter BERTHA.

Bertha. Count Fabian, let me hear thee read the signs
Of this unhappy morn!

Fab. I scarce can see
Aught now; the force is drawn beneath the walls—
Yet from the town a fresh attack is made.

Bertha. 'T is as an earthquake's tumult!

Fab. An assault
Made from the tower of the Cathedral church.

Bertha. Are the good saints asleep, that this should be?

Fab. Again it shakes the castle as 't would fall!
Oh that I were without, to take my part
In this day's struggle!

[*he looks out again.*

All is quiet here—
The plain of Sarni and the distant camp,
Without a living form, are all I see;
The little stream is running on in sunshine;
The breeze is stirring 'mong the chestnut trees
That grow adown the slope! How strange the contrast
Between the calm and beautiful repose
Of nature and the unholy strife of man!

[*the sounds of assault become yet louder, with shouts of triumph intermixed.*

Bertha. Heavens! what terrific power have human voices
In their ferocious triumph thus sent forth!

Fab. 'T is vain to look. The strife is close within
The very walls, and this small tower gives nought
Save quiet fields, and the green, waving tree-tops!

Bertha. Yet, yet again! these sounds might wake the dead!

Fab. To those cooped up, the strife is more appalling
Than in the open air, amid the contest.

Soldier. [*without*] Let 's forth, Sir Count, the assault comes nearer yet!
The inner walls are taken!

Fab. Curse the orders!
Pardon me, lady, but my soul is chafed
By this imprisonment!

Soldier. They need our help!
Let us go forth, Sir Count!
Fab. Brave soldiers, no!
You do defend the noble Ida Kronberg;
[*a more terrible explosion shakes the whole building; a death-like silence ensues.*

Enter IDA.

My father! Is he safe?

Enter COUNT NICHOLAS.

Count Nich. Hence! hence with me!
The foe hath got an entrance! hence with me
Unto the stronghold in the topmost tower!
Ida. Say, is my father safe?
Count Nich. He is, thank God!
[*to Fabian*] Take thou thy men, and on the turret stair
Join Segbert; he hath orders for the rest.
[*they all go out.*

SCENE IV.

A small room in the upper tower.

Enter the LORD OF KRONBERG, COUNTS NICHOLAS *and* SEGBERT.

Segbert. My lord, the foe hath got entire possession!

Nicholas. By that old passage opening to the river
They gained an entrance; there the mine was sprung
By which the breach was made.

Lord of K. Curse on ye all!
Why left you it unguarded?

Seg. Good, my lord,
You did declare a force of twenty men
Sufficient for the post, if 't were attempted;
And they were all cut down unto a man!

Lord of K. It was your post, and you have it deserted;
And but that 't is an hour we may not spare
From weightier business, you should die for 't, traitor!

Seg. [*throwing down his sword*] For five and fifty years I 've been your soldier,
And never was dishonoured till this hour!

Nich. Nay, my good lord of Kronberg, 't is unjust,
'T is most unjust, my lord! Segbert is true!
This is no time, indeed my lord, it is not,
Thus to affront a brave and loyal soldier!

Lord of K. Ye all of you are traitors!

Nich. My dear lord,
Let not our latest hours be spent in strife!
Count Segbert, take thy sword! Let not the rabble
Know of our strife—Count Segbert, take thy sword!

Seg. [*reluctantly taking it*] I am dishonoured, I
am called a traitor!
Shame on myself!—I am a veteran soldier
Seamed o'er with scars, and yet am called a traitor!
Nich. Thou art no traitor, Segbert!
My Lord Kronberg,
What is your will we answer to the foe?
Lord of K. How many may we count?
Nich. Our bravest soldiers
Lie dead within the breach—we are scant a hundred!
Lord of K. Then with this handful, I 'll defend
the tower—
Will see them die of famine, ere I yield it!
Shame on ye, would ye counsel aught beside?
Nich. I know no better counsel for the hour.
Lord of K. I shall return no answer to the rebel.
Now each unto his post; and leave no outlet
This time unwatched—but I will forth myself,
And keep you to your duties!

[*they go out.*

SCENE V.

The state-apartments of the Castle of Kronberg—a disorderly and drunken rabble, headed by Mother Schwartz, are despoiling them, and carrying off booty.

Enter PHILIP, *with a small company of* SOLDIERS, *who station themselves at the doors.*

Phil. Plunderers and spoilers, hence!

Mother S. Nay, we 'll not budge!

Many voices. We will not, we 'll have spoil as well as you!

Man. You might have lived and died with famished rats
Had we not helped you; and we 'll have our wages!

Another. We shall go short, unless we help ourselves!

Phil. Base spoilers, ye shall not deface these halls,
Down with your booty!

[*they make a general attempt to carry off spoil; the soldiers drive them back.*

Phil. Plunderers, lay it down—
Ye shall not hence, save ye go empty-handed!

Many voices. We will not out then! we will tarry here!
We will defend our own!

All. We will defend it!

Man. Curse him! he 'll say 't is his!

Phil. I swear 't is mine!

Ye are a herd of robbers, seeking outrage!
Down with your spoil, or, by my soul these swords
Shall be unsheathed on you!

Mother S. Ay, lord it Philip!
Trample upon us! Dare to draw a sword,
And thou shalt find thine equals, that thou shalt!

Phil. I'll strike thee down if thou defy me farther!
Stand back—and hear me speak!

Mother S. We will not hear thee!
Thou 'dst be a tyrant—be another Kronberg!

[*they make a fresh attempt to carry off their spoil; the soldiers oppose them; a violent contest ensues, and many are wounded.*

Mother S. [*aside*] Let us appear to yield. There is a force
Outside will take our part! We 'll have revenge!

Man. Give us free egress, Philip, and we 'll yield!

Phil. [*aside*] Curse on them, with their everlasting *Philip!*
Soldiers give place, and see that all go hence;
And yet go empty-handed!

[*he withdraws into an inner room.*

Many voices. Hang him! we 'll have a reckoning with him yet!

Woman. [*taking a body*] My son, my son! he 's dead!

Soldiers. Out with ye! Out!

[*the people are forced out, uttering threats and curses.*

Re-enter PHILIP.

One enemy is crushed, or well nigh crushed,
Cooped in a little tower, and scarce a hundred—
Meantime another rises, like the head
Of the gigantic Hydra—the fierce people,
Greedy of plunder, fickle and rapacious;
'T is the strong arm must crush them as they rise;
Must hurl them down to their subservient place,
And keep them there; as rude and rough materials,
Unsightly and unworthy, form the basement
Of kingly edifices—now I see
Wherefore the great must keep the low subjected.

Enter GASTON.

Gast. Dost fold thine arms as thou might'st take thine ease?
Thou art not lord of this dominion yet!

Phil. Speak plain, what is thy meaning?

Gast. The rude concourse,

Whom thou hast driven from the gates e'en now,
Strengthened with a gigantic force, return,
And claim access, mad with some fancied wrong.
Thou art no longer "noble, gracious Philip;"
But "tyrant," "bloody and injurious tyrant!"

Phil. I'll cut them into mouthfuls for the dogs!

Gast. Thou madman! These are they who gave thee power!

Phil. Wouldst give the fair reward of seven days' strife
To them for plunder?

Gast. Give them for plunder those
Who have adhered to Kronberg—not a few;
And all rich merchants who as princes lived,—
Fear not but they will fight like angry eagles
For their nest-eggs; thus wilt thou arm thy foes
Against each other, and be rid of both—
The merchants' names are here, their houses marked.

Phil. A goodly list! and only pity 't is
To give from our own hands such noble spoil.

Gast. There are a thousand ways to get it back!

Phil. An excellent friend! Thou hast untired resources!
Let 's have it done.

Gast. Listen, yet one word more.
The mine that gave to us an entrance here,
Hath shook the dungeons—they are insecure;

A plot is formed among the prisoners,
Many of whom are soldiers, to break forth,
Surprise thee in the night—retake the castle,
And give thee up to Kronberg!

Phil. Ha! is 't so?
Is danger then so nigh? But hear me, friend—
There is a gaoler stronger than stone walls—
Canst thou not manage it?

Gast. Dost thou mean death?
Murder so many men?

Phil. Wilt swear 't is true?

Gast. Upon my life, 't is true!

Phil. Then I'll not dally!
See thou to it—make sure of them ere midnight;
But let it only be 'twixt thee and me!
Meantime I 'll forth, and pacify these wolves.

[*he goes out.*

Gast. There is an easy conscience! On my troth
Not even myself could do the thing more coolly!
This human nature is a curious problem—
He who one day sheds tears with crying children,
Bespeaks the next a wholesale butchery;
And yet, the bloody wretch, he knows the shame on 't.
" Let it be only betwixt thee and me!"
Nay, nay, I 'll give the credulous whisper forth!

[*he goes out.*

ACT IV.—SCENE I.

Midnight — banqueting-room in the Castle of Kronberg—table spread—soldiers and attendants pass in and out, bearing wine and viands.

1*st Sol.* Full twenty different wines have all been broached—
The rarest wines of France and Germany—
It is a royal board!
2*d Sol.* The spits are turning;
There is a savoury smell throughout the house!
3*d Sol.* Think you they 'll scent the viands up aloft?
4*th Sol.* If they get that, it will be all they 'll get;
They 'd do us reverence for the bones I 'm thinking!
3*d Sol.* And then the prisoners in those darksome dungeons—
I pity them, poor souls, for most are soldiers—
Who 'll have the feeding of them?
2*d Sol.* Troth! they 'll go
One night without their suppers!
Attendant. They will taste
Nor morning meal, nor evening any more—
They 're dead ere this!

1st Sol. What, every prisoner—
Soldiers and all?

Attend. Ay, every one of them!
But what of that? The dungeon only knows
What wrongs are done within its dreary walls!

1st Sol. Ay, ay, these things may all be right and proper,
But they do chill the blood within one's veins;—
I love an enemy in open fight,
And, easy-conscienced, could cut down a hundred;
But 't is no part of noble soldiership
To stab i' the dark; and put the subtle poison
In meats and drinks! Who gave the order for 't?

Attend. Philip—our good lord Philip—who but he?

3d Sol. If but a hair of any soldier's head
Have come to harm, by Him, who is in heaven,
I will forswear the service of this Philip
As a blood-thirsty tyrant, worse than Kronberg!

4th Sol. If it be so, I will return on th' morrow
To my first soldier-oath!

2d Sol. And so will I!

Attend. Tush, tush! you all are fools!

2d Attend. [*running in*] All, all give place,—
Here come the lords o' th' night;

Enter Men, bearing dishes.

Now to your boards!
This is the topmost table, and my lord
Hath ordered every man his belly full.
This is above the salt—all ye must lower,—
Ye have your trenchers elsewhere—but for viands
Not one whit worse than these!

[*the soldiers go out, talking earnestly together—the attendants busy themselves in arranging the table.*

Enter PHILIP, GASTON, *and a great company.*

Phil. Be seated all—and let us try, my friends,
The cheer of this good night!
Ho! give us wine—
Fill every golden goblet to the brim,
And drink, my friends!

Gast. God save Duke Philip!

Enter OFFICER *hastily.*

I am much grieved to trouble the great joy
Of such an hour—but mine's a pressing errand.

Phil. Speak to the purpose, can'st not?

Officer. My good lord,
The burghers clamour at the gates for help

Against those lawless thousands that despoil,
By indiscriminate plunder, every house!

Phil. Damnation on them! Bid the burghers fight
For their own hearths and homes!

Officer. I will, my lord!

Gast. [*taking up a cup*] Drink to the universal sentiment—
Long life, and long success unto Duke Philip!

Enter the old LORD OF MAINE.

Lord of M. Sitt'st thou, my son, thus banqueting at ease
When blood is pouring like an undammed river;
And lawless rapine through the midnight city
Rages like hell let loose? For two long hours,
Has burgher after burgher called on thee
With piteous cries and groans!

Phil. Peace, peace, my lord,
One is dispatched even now will see to it.

Lord of M. It is thy cause, my son! Up, arm thyself;
All is one scene of tumult, blood, and frenzy—
The burghers, for their wives and daughters, pray
More than their wealth! Thy fortune will be lost
If thou hold back! Shame on this drunken riot,
When all that 's dear to manhood calls thee out!

Enter SOLDIER.

Soldier. My lord, the burghers bring their wives and daughters
Here for protection. They demand your presence—
The city is on fire in every quarter!

Phil. Confusion seize them! I shall not go forth
And do their bidding, as they choose to dictate!

Lord of M. Then I will buckle harness on, and forth!—
What gentlemen will up, and come with me?

Many officers. We will to horse with you, and quell this tumult!

Gast. [*aside*] If that old man go forth, he ruins all!
Stay, brave old sir, we will not tax your arm
Against these scurvy ruffians! I myself
Will be lieutenant-general on this night—
Sit every gentleman, I 'll do 't myself.

Lord of M. This is more grace than I had looked for from thee;
Thou art not often ready for good deeds!

Phil. Sit every one; 't is but a petty tumult,
Which he will quell with half a score of soldiers!

[*they seat themselves.*

Gast. [*aside*] Now this is right! I 'll out, and set the city

In such a bloody tumult as shall make
This time be chronicled "the night of terror!"

[*he goes out.*

SCENE II.

A small room of the upper tower — the Lord of Kronberg alone.

Lord of K. When great misfortune threats a noble house,
'T is a great sacrifice that must be made
For its retrieve—and 't is the part of greatness
Misfortune to defy by nobly yielding!
Should I deny nobility to Philip
It were a lie—the blood that warms his veins
Flows from a regal source. There are who say
This land by right is his—I yield not that—
But as my daughter's dower, I may confer
Reversion of its rule on whoso weds her.
Suppose it Philip; I get added power,—
Dominion o'er the factious multitude
Estranged from me, but firm allies of his.—
It may be that my daughter may object
To this rough wooing—but a truce to that;
I can enforce obedience!—and in sooth
Philip would not displease a woman's eye.
But here she comes—though little like a bride.

Enter IDA.

My daughter, banish these dejected looks!

Ida. Welcome misfortune, if it give me back
Thy love, my dearest father!

Lord of K. Some harsh words
I spoke to thee at parting, I remember—
Forgive thy father, Ida; he was wroth,
More with the woe that pressed him, than with thee!

Ida. Nay, ask not my forgiveness!

Lord of K. Thou, dear child,
Sweet image of thy mother, the most true,
The patientest, the fairest of all women—
Thou art my only hope!

Ida. Hope, father! Hast thou hope?

Lord of K. Yes, Ida; hope in thee, who can'st retrieve
The fortunes of our house, and give again
Power to my hand, and peace unto the state!

Ida. *I* do thus much, who am a feeble woman!

Lord of K. Thou dost not know, thou little, trembling fool,
That this land is in anarchy for thee—
That 't is for thee so many brave men sleep
In the cold arms of death!

Ida. My father, no!—
'T is insolent ambition and revenge
Have poured out blood like water!
Lord of K. Pshaw, pshaw, girl!
What know 'st thou of these things? But from the time
Of the old town of Troy, unto this hour,
Women upset the world, ha! ha!
Ida. My father,
Jest not! What is the tenor of thy words?
Lord of K. Philip of Maine did ask thy hand in marriage,
Which I refused; thence rose this civil contest.
Then was he poor, brought up in sordid thrift,
Whom it had been disgrace for Ida Kronberg,
To have been wife unto. Now he has power,—
And woe is me, that it should even be so!
Has given his name a terrible ascendance;
And we must crouch beneath him, live his slaves,
Be trampled on; unless, like those who make
Events their servitors—true wisdom's rule,
We take him by his craft—yield but to keep
The power which but in seeming we resign.
Thy hand, my child, will heal this civil broil,
Will give again dominion to thy father—
What says my Ida? He of Maine is noble;
Is brave; hath power; is a mean man no longer!

Ida. When Philip sought my hand he was as noble,—
Nobler than now! His name had not a stain!
Lord of K. A sordid, pennyless lord, without respect;
Scarce raised above the vassals of the soil!
Ida. That humble, pennyless lord, I would have wedded,
Because he then was worthy of my love.
Lord of K. Hear I aright!
Ida. Thou hears't aright, my father,—
Ah be not wroth, but hear me calmly on.
Philip of Maine is a dishonoured man!
Thou wouldst not have me wed with such a one—
My father, thou wouldst not!
Lord of K. Thou wouldst have wedded
The son of a fallen house brought up in thrift—
Poor as a hind, but not so serviceable—
One that was as a proverb and a jest—
A needy lord, that in a threadbare jerkin
Came as a wooer! And now that he has gained
Dominion and a name, why, in good sooth,
Thou wilt not condescend to such a one!
Ida. Because he hath laid waste this wretched land;
Hath shewn himself a fierce, revengeful man,
And is thy deadly, cruel enemy!

Lord of K. I would retain my power by winning him.

Ida. Is it to such a man thou'dst wed thy daughter?

Lord of K. Unsay what thou hast said—that thou'dst have wedded
Philip of Maine when he was low and needy!

Ida. Then was he true and gentle—a brave man—
A loyal man, my father!

Lord of K. Could I think it,
I'd curse thee Ida, with my bitterest curse.
Thou loved this man! By heaven, if it be so—
Say, didst thou love him?

Ida. Father, curse me not!
Enough of woe has been; nay, do not curse,
Lest God should register the sin in heaven!

Lord of K. Didst love this man?

Ida. The time is past—
The time is gone for ever when I loved him!

Lord of K. Oh heaven and earth!

Ida. My gracious father, hear.
I loved him with a first, true maiden's love—
I loved him when a little child, my father—
But as a sacrifice to holy duty
I cast him forth from my sincerest heart,
As an unworthy man—thine enemy;
The spoiler of thy people!

Lord of K. Thou hast loved hi
And thou shalt wed him!—Thou, against my
Hast loved, and I will wed thee 'gainst thy w.
To him for punishment!—By heaven I will!

Ida. Father, if I have ever warmed thy hear
If I have ever been delight unto thee—
By whate'er love thou borest to my mother—
And by the sacredness of her bequest
Which gave me to thy care, her only child—
Oh pity—save me from this cruel doom!

Lord of K. Out with thee!—thou art hateful
my sight!—
Thou lovedst that most beggarly, vile man!
And now that I am struggling, in his power,
Thou wilt not lift a finger to my help!

Ida. Oh that my life could save thee!

Lord of K. Then consent—
'T is a small thing thy father asks of thee—
His power, dearer than his life's-blood, is in thy
hands!

Ida. Oh, not to wed him, father!

Lord of K. Then begone!
And never call me father—I 'll be lord
Until thou hast another, and by God
He shall teach thee submission!

[*Ida retires, and he goes out by another door.*

SCENE III.

Ida's apartment.

Enter PHILIP.

And here she dwelt! Here passed her beautiful life!
A tender, humanizing influence
Breathes through the room! Ambition, hate, and vengeance,
Have here no entrance: did I then believe
That hate had conquered love, and hot ambition
Driven from my heart all by-gone tenderness?
But to be near her—but to breathe the air
Which she has breathed awakes all former love;
And worthier, now methinks, the blessed life
Spent in all sweet and kindly charities,
Though nameless, noiseless as an unseen rill,
Than the great conqueror's years of bloody glory!

Enter GASTON.

Gast. My noble lord, 't were pity your sweet dreams
In this fair lady's chamber should be broken—
But I am here upon an embassy
Allied to love, at least to matrimony!

Phil. Ha! a capitulation of this sort?

Gast. Your noble prisoner offers his fair daughter,
On the condition that you should restore
To him all power i' the state; yet should receive
A rich and noble dowry with his daughter;
And further, you should bear at his decease,
When the land's sceptre unto you devolves,
As title of the state, Kronberg and Maine.

Phil. Well, that is fair enough!

Gast. Do you say thus—
You that are lord already of this realm!
Is it for him to give as pleaseth him,
And you most humbly to receive with thanks?
Thus will you yield your conquest and your birthright!

Phil. I swore that he should offer me his daughter!

Gast. And then that you would wed her? No, not so!
Besides, this man is craftier than you are—
Think you that he would keep his faith with you?
I tell you no! This is a trick of cunning,
To get you in his power. He knows your love,
And by this passion will he work your ruin.

Phil. 'T is easier said than done!

Gast. And if you yield
One atom of the power you have achieved,
A faction in the state will rise against you.
The burghers' hearts already are estranged;

Resentment grows against you hourly stronger—
No longer now they speak below their breath;—
Rule them, or they rule you!—and traitorous Kronberg
Will give you up to them as a peace-offering.
[*aside*] And for my last night's pranks you would die by inches.

Phil. Who counselled sending forth those ravening wolves
Into the midnight city?

Gast. And who counselled
The midnight murder of the prisoners?
For this the soldiers murmur.

Phil. Give them gold—
Mine is a ruined cause without the soldiers—
It is a difficult course I have to steer:
Contending currents strive against my bark,
Fate knows if I shall clear them!

Gast. I'll be pilot,
And steer you through the storm—but hear me on!
The bodies of the citizens are piled
In the great square, with such sad pomp of woe
As the short time allows; and oaths are ta'en
Of vengeance upon you, save you will promise
All the demands set forth with wordy wisdom
In this long document. [*aside*] But I'll not shew't:

Here they require "that felon-traitor, Gaston,
To be brought to condign punishment for 's sins!"

Phil. Thou 'rt ever prating of these citizens—
Methought there was an embassy of marriage!

Gast. So fickle are the people, they demand
Kronberg again for ruler!

Phil. He shall die!

Gast. And in the distant fields the lawless many
Are listening to the long harangues of Roland,
That mouthing, wordy fool, who never loses
An opportunity for talk. There broods no good!

Phil. One might indeed believe my cause was doubtful
To hear you talk!

Gast. Your 's is a doubtful cause
While Kronberg lives—he forms a plea for faction.

Phil. Now speak you to the point — Kronberg shall die!

Gast. Gold is less precious than the passing moments.

Phil. Promise the citizens whate'er they ask.

Gast. Ay, ay, I 'll promise them! I' faith, you know
Performance is a very different matter!

Phil. We shall not be so over-nice 'bout that!
And let us with a shew of seemly joy

Accept Lord Kronberg's offer. Still our prisoner,
He falls into the trap he lays for me.

Gast. Poison or steel will make us sure of him!
And then you have his daughter in your power.

Phil. But honour's strictest law shall be observed
Toward that most noble lady! As her husband
I get a fairer title to the state
With Kronberg's partizans!

Gast. Well, as you will—
Marry or not, as likes you! [*aside*] She will undo
This dainty statesman's trick!

Phil. What are you mumbling o'er? Let us away,
I 'll clasp my bride before the set of day!

[*they go out together.*

SCENE IV.

Apartment in the tower—Ida and Bertha.

Berth. Oh do not yield unto this bloody man—
Another day and succour will arrive—
Fabian will leave no friend, no means untried—
They call again for Kronberg in the city;
And Philip's reign, though told by so few hours,
Is chronicled in blood.

Ida. I hear their steps—
Leave me alone, dear Bertha, for this trial!

Berth. Within thy call will I await thy summons.
[*she goes out.*

Ida. Now for the dreadful meeting! — How I tremble
To meet the man who was so dear to me!

Enter PHILIP, *magnificently apparelled.*

Phil. Now do we meet without reproach or fear—
Not as we parted, my own gentle Ida!

Ida. No, no, we do not meet as last we parted:
Thou art not such as when we parted last—
He was a gracious man, unstained with blood;
He wore not proud apparel, such as this;
He was a poor, brave man! a guiltless man,
Who might have called on heaven to be his pledge—
Thou art not such as he!

Phil. But more than he!
I am the man on whom thy sire bestows thee,
He was rejected by him!

Ida. Woe is me,
That I must still oppose my father's will!
Though thou wert poor, clothed but in humble weeds;
Unsheltered from the pitiless winds of heaven;
Without a name, save what thy father won,

Yet pure in soul, noble in principle,
Gracious in deed and merciful of heart,
I would have ta'en thee, spite the world's reproach.
But tricked out in these gorgeous robes of state;
A name of terror unto weeping thousands;
With the offence of blood upon thy soul;
If thou didst lay the world's crown at my feet
I must reject thee, Philip!

Phil. Fickle woman!
How art thou slave to every passing humour.

Ida. Why should I tell of secret tears and prayers
Poured out to heaven for thee? It is heaven's will
That I should see my dearest hopes depart!

Phil. It was for thee I strove—for thee I conquered—
Hast thou not wept the sorrows of the people!
Hast not deplored their wrongs, and proudly fashioned
A lovely dream of glorious freedom out?
And was it not thyself who bade me be
Protector of the people?

Ida. God forgive me!
For how hast thou fulfilled this glorious vision—
How been protector of the ignorant people?
Hast thou not shed their blood? Outraged their homes—
And led them up, like hungry, ravening wolves,
To prey upon each other? Philip, Philip,

Thou hast forgot thy holy enterprise
To feed thine own revenge!
Phil. Name not revenge,
Lest thou too tempt me to it!
Ida. Heaven be our shield—
It will prescribe thee bounds, even as it limits
The raging of the sea! Oh how thou'rt fallen,—
The apostates of the morning fell not lower!
Philip, I wept my ruined, lovely hopes
With bitterer tears than ever woman shed;
But I have done with tears; they moved not heaven,
That loveth mercy! But I will conjure thee
By that unkind ambition which preferred
Revenge and power to love, to risk no further,—
And let the blood which has been shed suffice!
Phil. Oh yes, thy words have power! Sweet maid, relent!
Thy tender mercies, like kind angels' wings,
Bring blessings with them; where I shall have wounded,
Thou shalt pour in sweet balm!
Ida. Alas! alas!
Thou hast left many wounds for me to heal!
No—henceforth we are widely separate—
Not e'en the Eternal One undoeth the past,
And that which has been done hath sundered us!
Phil. Then upon thee lie every coming sin!

If thou keep not thy plighted faith with me,
Neither will I keep faith. Thy father dies!

Ida. Philip, thou wilt not—dar'st not kill my father!

Phil. How dare I not? As yet I have not found
The deed I dared not do!

Ida. Perfidious man!
If this poor life can sate thy thirst of blood,
Take it, but spare my father!

Phil. I have said it!

Ida. I gave *thy* father life—O spare thou mine!
I risked my life to save thy father's, Philip!

Phil. It was a woman's act—thus do not men!

Ida. Oh how does guilt put out each virtuous spark,
Stifle each generous, noble sentiment!

Phil. Now for a little season, we will part—
When next we meet, my hands shall yet be redder!

[*he goes out.*

Ida. Hence, hence! What may be done, shall yet be done—
We will not fall without a dying struggle—
Where's Bertha, Segbert, good Count Nicholas!

[*she goes into the inner room.*

ACT V.—SCENE I.

The ruins of a mill, surrounded with wood.

Enter MOTHER SCHWARTZ, HANS CLEF, ROLAND, *and many others.*

Roland. It neither shall be this man, neither that
That shall be tyrant o'er us! What 's this Philip
Better than Kronberg, if his arm's as heavy?

Hans. We 've seen enough of him!

Mother S. We 'll none of him!

Others. We 'll none of him!

Roland. And this is he who swore
To be a loving father to the people;
Clothes to the naked; bread unto the hungry!

Hans. We are mistaken!—we are clean mistaken!

Roland. No, no, he 's a deceiver!

Mother S. There's that brewing
Which will bring down a tempest 'bout his ears!

Roland. Anon they will be here who from the city
Will bring us tidings of the general temper.

Hans. They are here!

Enter several Men.

Roland. Tell out your tidings quickly.

1*st Man.* [*throwing down a heap of garments*]
These caps and handkerchiefs from off the dead

I snatched in eager haste—thus and thus only
Come tidings of your dead!

[*the people gather round, recognizing the garments with loud lamentations and yells of indignation.*

Mother S. Ah, this was his! Ah, this was my poor son's!

1*st Man.* 'T was from a mangled corpse I took that kerchief!

Mother S. My son! my son! But back tears to your source—
I will shed blood, not tears!

Roland. What say the burghers,
Those ancient friends of his?

2*d Man.* The general feeling
Is clean against him now. They swear he gave
The town to pillage but to save his own!

Hans. And that he did! We're sure enough of that!

2*d Man.* Gaston, they say's the very fiend himself—
All saw his horrid doings yesternight—
O' troth, there is some riddle 'bout that man!

Hans. And let whoever sins, 't is we are blamed for 't.

Roland. Speak now of the condition of the city.

2*d Man.* There is no house that is not filled with mourning—

The richest citizens were killed i' th' tumult—
One-third the city is a heap of ruins—
And little children, wandering up and down,
Go wailing for their parents—parents too
And friends, and wives and husbands seek their dead.
'Mong heaps of fallen houses—everywhere,
Deep oaths are taken of revenge on Philip.

Mother S. All have their oaths of blood against that man!

Man. The soldiers too are discontent,—'t is said
A horrid massacre i' th' dead o' th' night
Has cut off every prisoner.

Roland. There is hope!—
What guard is stationed 'neath the castle rock?

3d Man. The guard has been withdrawn.

Roland. There's an old pathway,
Think ye we might not get an entrance there?
Thereby it was that Philip made his entrance!

4th Man. I know it well; yet 't will be dangerous,
More inaccessible from tumbled crags
And fallen masonry than heretofore.

Mother S. Our wrongs can force through rocks of adamant.

Roland. 'T will suit our purpose; now let all disperse,
And when eve comes we will again assemble.

[*they disperse severally.*

SCENE II.

Evening — the gallery of the castle — Philip pacing about, in deep thought.

On, on unto the topmost verge of power;
And, as I yet ascend, still more doth grow
The grasping wish for more;—the aspiring wish
Higher and higher to rise. This petty lordship,
Why not a sovereign dukedom? Wherefore not
The Duke of Maine as good as Duke of Suabia?
And Kronberg dead; the path is right before me.
Ambition and revenge shall have their way!—
But where is Gaston? he, the ready tool
Who does not start and cry "alack, my lord!"
Ha! here he comes!

Gast. No moment may be lost—
Fabian and Segbert, and Count Nicholas
Are hence. As firebrands in the standing corn
Are they among the people; and a rumour
Has reached the town, that Suabia draweth near
With a strong army for the aid of Kronberg.
Do quickly what thou dost, and rid thyself
Of one foe ere another takes the field!

Phil. Thou hast access unto the tower. Go thou,
Poison or steel, use thou the surer means!

Gast. Nay, 't will be tenfold vengeance from thy hand.

Phil. [*feeling at his dagger*] 'T is sharp and true,
but do thou mix a cup
Of subtle poison. I would liefer that—
And if he will not pledge me, why, there 's this!

Gast. I 'll mix a cunning potion that will do.

Enter the LORD OF MAINE.

My son! my son! hast thou decreed his death?

Phil. I have.

Lord of M. Nay, do not tell me so.

Phil. I have.

Lord of M. Didst thou not love his gentle, angel daughter?
Remember her, and do not harm his life.

Gast. And be himself the victim!

Lord of M. It is thou
That counsellest my son to these bad deeds!
Philip, she gave me life and liberty,
And, but for her, thy father had been dead!

Phil. Whose hate was 't doomed thee to the gallows-tree?
Hence! hence! thou dost not know, for urgently
The hour calls for his blood!

Lord of M. I leave thee not,
Till thou hast given his life unto my prayer.

Gast. to Phil. Fortune is slipping through your hand, my lord,
While you stand dallying thus. Away, old man!

Phil. I 'm ready. Let 's begone.

[*they go out together.*

Lord of M. Then, may the Avenger
Take from thee thy ill-gotten power and station!
This is a place of blood and horrible outrage:
I will away; men's hearts are turned to stone.
Better it were to hide with desert-beasts,
Where 't is a natural instinct to be cruel!

[*he goes out.*

After a short time re-enter PHILIP.

I did not quail, nor did my heart upbraid me,
When thousands lay beneath my conquering step,
And from the helmet-crown unto the heel
I was dyed crimson; why then faints my soul,
Trembling and drooping 'neath a mountain's weight
Of miserable remorse for one man's blood?—
Ne'er till this moment, when my debt is paid,
When I have conquered my great enemy,
Quailed I, or wished undone aught that was done!
But hark! What sounds are these—quick, coming steps,
And hurried voices? Am I grown a coward?

Enter GASTON.

Philip! Philip! now is a time for action:
Why dost thou stare as one who walks in dreams?

Phil. Whence come those hurried sounds? Whose are those steps?

Gast. The disaffected thousands from the fields
Are on the walls—within the very castle!

Phil. How got they an access?

Gast. Even as thou didst;
By the old rock-path. Hundreds more have entered—
The portals have they fired; and hark their cries—
Vengeance and blood!

Phil. Hence; draw the soldiers out,
And man the walls. Strike every villain down
That sets his foot within the castle gate.

Gast. They fight with us for every inch of ground;
They are within the walls—the place is fired;
Accursed knaves, born for the gibbet-tree!

Phil. [*drawing his sword*] I'll teach them what the cry of vengeance meaneth!

[*he rushes out—Gaston follows him.*

[*a confused noise, and yelling cries are heard approaching, and a rabble force their way in, with torches in their hands.*

Man. Down with the billets! Here! here! Fire these hangings!

[*they hurl furniture into the middle of the gallery, tear down pictures and hangings, which they pile together and set fire to.*

Enter MOTHER SCHWARTZ, *with other women, covered with dust and blood.*

Mother S. Spare not for fire! Now for a funeral pile,
To celebrate, my son, thy memory!
They shall say, this was for the woman's son!
Out with ye, are ye plundering? Give me blood!
He whom I seek is hence! Come, come with me!

[*she snatches up a firebrand and rushes out of the gallery; the women follow her, bearing off booty. The gallery is filled with smoke and flames.*

SCENE III.

The small chamber in the tower—Ida and Bertha.

Berth. Some new event is happening. May't please heaven
For our deliverance!

Ida. Those are the people's voices ;
The yelling cries of the triumphant rabble.
And, mercy ! those quick lights that through the darkness
Shoot up to heaven are flames ! The place is burning !

Berth. [*trying to force the door*] 'T is barred ! 't is doubly barred ! There is no issue !
Here, here, we miserably shall die by fire !
Oh, Ida, vain thy prayer !—They have no mercy—
That old man will not move his cruel son
To save thy father, and we here shall perish !
Oh, can there be Omnipotence in heaven,
Who sees these things, yet sends no angel down
To smite and to deliver !

Ida. Nay, despair not ;
I do believe some power will save us yet !

Berth. Oh, do not mock me ! there's no ruth in heaven,
On earth there is no goodness !

Ida. [*listening at the door*] Some one comes !

Enter the LORD OF MAINE.

Ida. Is good Lord Kronberg safe ?

Berth. And what do mean
These horrid sounds of tumult, and these flames ?

Lord of M. Come forth, my noble ladies ! 'T is an hour

Of peril and alarm! Will you confide
In an old man? I am no soldier, lady;
But, so God help me, I will guard you well!
Ida. I know you, and will trust in you! Oh guide us
Unto Lord Kronberg's cell! Where lies my father?
Lord of M. Your noble father's free.
Ida. Your voice is sad,
And yet your words are pleasant. Lead us to him!
Lord of M. Quick! follow me!

[*they wrap themselves in their cloaks and follow him.*

SCENE IV.

Another part of the castle—citizens stand with Lord Kronberg's body on a bier.

1*st Citizen.* Name not his faults. I knew him when a boy;
I was his favoured playmate; in those years
Together did we ride, and at the target
Together shoot our arrows. I ne'er thought
Then to have borne him in a plight like this!
2*d Citizen.* He was a hard task-master!
3*d Citizen.* But not harder
Than such be ever. Even from Pharoah downwards
To this day's idol, Philip!

4th Citizen. I remember,
It must be five and forty years agone,
When his good mother——

3d Citizen. Ay, there was a lady,
Fair as an angel, full of truth and kindness—
The Lady Ida much resembles her.

5th Citizen. Haste, haste! the way is clear! The contest thickens
About the northern tower. O woful night—
With fire and blood, wild shrieks and horrid curses,
And crash of falling walls! But forward now!
[*they proceed.*

Enter the LORD OF MAINE *conducting* IDA, *and* BERTHA.

Lord of M. [*hastily retreating*] Ah, not this way! No, no! a moment's pause.
[*aside*] Yon is a sight that must not meet their eyes!

Citizens re-enter with the body.

1st Citizen. It shall not be exposed unto dishonour!
Seek out a guard, and stand around the bier!
[*soldiers rush in*] Ho! soldiers, will ye not defend the dead?

Soldier. We fight for Philip of Maine, not for the dead!

Ida. The dead, said ye? Is good Lord Kronberg dead?
Speak to me, some kind soul, for I 'm his daughter!

1st Soldier. [*aside*] She doth unman me!

2d Soldier. [*aside*] 'T is a noble lady!

[*Ida perceives the bier, and walks slowly towards it.*

Lies the dead here? Soldiers and citizens,
Lies here your lord and leader? Oh, will no one
Tell me if 't is not so?

1st Citizen. Alas! 't is even so!

Ida. 'T was a sad voice that told me he was free!
The freedom of the grave—ah, woful freedom!

[*she slowly uncovers the face of the dead, gazes upon it, and becomes deadly pale.*

Citizen. Dear, innocent soul!

Soldier. I will not draw a sword
Against the Lady Ida, nor her cause!

Ida. I never looked upon the dead till now—
And this is my dead father, who hath fallen
By cruel perfidy!—Not in the field
He met his mortal foe, but in the cell
Of the deep dungeon: a fierce, cruel foe!
Ye do not know, soldiers and citizens,
The heartless man of blood whom ye have chosen!
The dead was mild and merciful, compared
With him you call your master! Pious friends,
Carry him hence!—This is a den of crime;
A house of cruelty and fear and blood!
Carry him hence into a holy place,

So Heaven preserve you to your childrens' arms,
And keep your sacred homes inviolate!

Soldiers. We will defend the dead, and Lady Ida!

1*st Citizen.* Whither shall we support this honoured bier?

Ida. Would he had known your loyalty and goodness!
To the Cathedral—'t is a holy place;
And there will I retire: and let all loyal,
All brave and noble hearts around me rally;
And, as the dead would have maintained the right,
So God and all good men assisting me,
Will we retrieve this land's forlorn estate!

[*the bier is borne forward; and Ida, overcome by her emotions, is supported out by Bertha and the Lord of Maine, attended by crowds of citizens and soldiers.*

SCENE V.

Past midnight—outside the castle wall—the castle is burning—the roof has fallen in, and immense volumes of flame, wrapped round the towers, pierce through the blackness of the ascending smoke, like fiery Alps —hundreds of people are seen rushing to and fro; some driven back by soldiers, others carrying off booty—wild shouts and yells of triumph are heard amid the roar of the flames and the crashing fall of huge piles of buildings.

Enter PHILIP *and* GASTON.

Gast. 'T is vain to struggle more! Fire is the victor.

Phil. Now, draw the soldiers back, and leave the pile
To those accursed plunderers. Ere the morn,
'T will be the grave of hundreds, who now press
Impatient through the burning atmosphere,
To snatch a paltry booty!

Gast. As thou wilt—
'T is a retrieveless game. Thy sun has set—
The star of thy ascendency has fallen!

Phil. Hast not intelligible words?—Speak plain!

Gast. I'll speak it plain enough!—Lord Kronberg heads
The burghers even now!

Phil. Peace, liar! he is dead!

Gast. But being dead, is honoured more than living—

His daughter hath made speeches o'er the body;
Shed tears, and whined with pretty artifice,
Till they have all unsaid their oaths to thee!

Phil. Thou that didst keep the body, hast betrayed me!

Gast. An old man has betrayed thee; even thy father—

Better by far he had died upon the gibbet!

Phil. Slanderer, for shame!

Gast. Nay, hang me, if I spoke not
Your secret thoughts.—But now the time is precious!
Draw off the soldiers who yet true remain;
Get to the camp, upon the plain of Sarni,
And hold thyself prepared, for on the morrow
There will be work to do, than this more bloody—
And as thou play'st this desperate game, depends
Thy waning fortune.

Phil. Suabia to the field
Hath brought his fresh ten thousand.

Gast. You may thank
The gentle Lady Ida and her Counts
For this young gallant rival. You have seen him—
A not unfitting husband for the lady!

Phil. Thou cockatrice — thou stabber of the wounded!

Gast. Ha! ha! you have some pretty names by heart!

[*aside*] I knew that this would gall him!

Phil. Unkind friend—
I trusted unto thee my soul's best secrets;
I did believe thee not the worldly spirit
That stabs the bleeding heart—then jeering asks
"How is it with you now?"—The cruellest blow
Of my most cruel fortune has been this!

Gast. Nay, take 't not so to heart! I would but urge thee
To try thy fortune against mighty odds,
And conquer fate!

Phil. My soul is faint within me;
Hence, let the morrow for itself provide!

[*he goes.*

Gast. He beareth poisoned arrows in his heart;
Hatred and jealousy, and crushed ambition!
If these will not o'ercome the spirit of man,
Then there 's a devil in him.

[*he goes.*

SCENE VI.

The following evening—the interior of the cathedral—the body of Lord Kronberg laid in state before the altar—Ida, in deep mourning, sits upon the steps beside it, and Bertha and other ladies stand about her — the Lord of Maine wrapped in his cloak, leans against a monument apart from the rest—the doors are guarded by armed burghers.

Enter COUNT FABIAN *in haste.*

Burgher. What is the news?

Fab. An entire victory!
A bloody field is fought—the day is ours—
Philip has fled—the remnant of his army
Have yielded to our friends—a moment more,
And brave Count Nicholas will here arrive
With message from the Duke to Lady Ida:
Even now he comes.

Enter COUNT NICHOLAS.

Count Nich. May 't please the Lady Ida
To hear a message from the field of fight?
[*Ida rises.*
God has been good unto this troubled land,
And given her victory o'er her enemies.

Yet here the noble conqueror entereth not
Save as your good ally, by your consent.
His army, camped without the town remains—
Grant him to lay his good sword at your feet!

Ida. Brave Count, thou lov'dst my father. Let the dead
Be honoured with all rites of sepulture,
Before the land rejoice for victory.
For me, a mighty debt is yet unpaid
To grief and filial duty. To some house
Of holy solitude I will retire
A season; and meantime confide to thee,
And such good men as thou, the nation's rule.
Not my own natural strength has borne me through
The great events and awful of this time.
Nature is weak, and now doth need repose:
But let one general thanksgiving ascend
To gracious heaven, which has restored us peace,
Though at a price so great.
And from the duke
I crave forgiveness, that I meet him not;
The mournful duties of the time excuse me.

[*Count Nicholas goes out.*

Lord of M. They said my son had fled. I must away!
He is my son—the evil hour is dark;
And misery and remorse are cruel foes!

Where victory is, is not a place for me—
I was not needed in his hour of pride,
In sorrow and dismay I shall be lacked.
O fare thee well! Be merciful, dear lady:
He loved thee once, and for thy sake he fell!
And if he fall into thy power, have mercy—
Think not upon the dead, but on the time
When he was worthy of thee!

Ida. Fare thee well—
Go!—and may heaven so gift thy words with grace
As to restore him to its blessed peace!—
Farewell, thou kindest, noblest heart, farewell!

[*the Lord of Maine kisses her hand, and, folding his face in his cloak, goes out.*

SCENE VII.

Three days after the battle—the dusk of the evening—the interior of a cave in a dreary forest—Philip lying asleep; the Lord of Maine bending over him.

Lord of M. It is a blessed sleep! It will restore him
To his right mind! Oh that we might abide
In some deep wood, 'mong mountains far away;
Some wilderness, where foot of man ne'er trod;

Some desert island, in an unknown sea,
Where he might wear his life in holy peace,
And I be the true friend that tended on him!

Phil. [*opening his eyes*] Where am I? and what gentle sounds are these?

Lord of M. Sleep yet, my son! Thou know'st how I did watch
O'er thee a child; how sung to thee o' nights—
Recal that time, and sleep!

Phil. I cannot sleep!—
My father, thou hast been a gracious sire,
And I have owed thee duties manifold;
Thou hast been good and kind; yet one more kindness
Do me this day—my arm is weak and faint,
Strike thou my dagger in this wretched breast!

Lord of M. What askest thou! It is a sinner's thought!

Phil. Wilt see me dragged, a spectacle, a show?
Wilt hear them sing their ballads in my face?
Hark! hark! I hear their steps! Give me the dagger!

Lord of M. Nay, 't is no sound, but the low whispering wind!

Phil. I tell thee they are here! Withstand me not—

There is a strength like madness in my arm—
I will defend myself!

[*he starts up and seizes a dagger.*

Enter GASTON.

Ha! is it thou!

Gast. Peace be with thee! nay, put thy dagger down!
I am thy friend—and bring a band of friends
To reassure thy fortunes—Give's thy hand!

Phil. [*giving his hand*] I did believe thee better than thou seem'st;
My heart was slow to misconceive of thee!

Gast. Now shalt thou know me truly as I am:
Now will I bring thy truest friends unto thee!

[*a band of soldiers rush in and seize Philip.*

Phil. Ay now I know thee, thou accursed Judas!

Gast. But I've a better price than Judas had—
A better price for a less worthy man!

Phil. My life's severest blow has been thy friendship!

Enter MOTHER SCHWARTZ, *with a drawn dagger.*

Now will I have thy blood for my son's blood!

Soldier. Off woman, off! Alive he must be taken.

Mother S. I 'll have his blood! I will not break my oath!

[*she suddenly stabs him.*

There's that will send thee howling to my son!

Soldier. Thou 'st robbed us of our price! take thy reward!

[*he stabs her.*

Phil. My day is done! Let me lie down and die!

Lord of M. Within my arms! thy father's arms, my son!

Cast up thy thoughts to heaven! think not of man!

Soldier. He 's dead, he hears thee not! Give us the body!

Father. Ye shall not part me from this precious clay—

Where'er ye bear it, thither will I follow!

Achzib, throwing off his disguise, entered the city in his own character. It was a city of mourning, which he had made so; but his evil nature saw in human misery, material rather of mirth than compassion. He would much rather have torn open the wounds of social life, than have seen them healing; but now was the calm after the storm, the reaction after excitement and emotion, and men coveted so much to be at rest, that not even Achzib could have agitated another tumult. He therefore adopted the spirit of the time, and railed against liberty as anarchy, against renovators as anarchs.

It was with malignant pleasure he saw how the holy cause of freedom was thrown back, by the outrages which ambition and the license of evil had committed in her name: he saw how virtuous men and honest patriots, who had joined Philip against despotism, but abandoned him in his bloody and

ambitious career, now came forth from their retirements, and rallying round the person of Ida, united heart and hand to re-establish the old order of things, disgusted with liberty, as with a lying priestess, and in despair of renovating social life or social policy: he saw the people sit down, willing to endure patiently whatever evil power might inflict upon them, provided they were protected from rapine and blood, and the pretences of ambition to make them again free; and satisfied that all here was as he could desire, he turned his steps to another scene of action.

It was on an evening, bright and balmy as one in Paradise, when Achzib strolled into the place of public resort adjacent to a great city. On its smooth roads were seen the equipages of the grandees, and equestrian companies of gentlemen and ladies, who, governing their high-bred and mettlesome horses with graceful ease, reminded the spectator rather of the pages of Ariosto than of a scene in real life. On seats under the old leafy trees, or on the bright green turf, sat men, women and children, in their holiday attire, all beautiful as separate groups, but more beautiful as forming one great whole of human enjoyment.

There was a poet among them, but with feelings different to those of others;—their's was an individual happiness only, but his was a warm, broad philanthropy, forgetting self, embracing all, loving all, and pouring out thanksgiving that man was enabled, both old and young, rich and poor, to go forth and rejoice.

Achzib approached, and took the vacant seat beside him. "Considering," said he, "the ill-condition of society, the tyranny of rulers, and the misery of the subordinate classes, there is no inconsiderable measure of human enjoyment even in a space narrow as this."

"Man's capacity for enjoyment," replied the poet, even under circumstances unfavourable to general happiness, is one of the most beautiful and beneficent ordinations of Providence. A balmy atmosphere and a fine sunset, common occurrences of nature as these are, contribute immensely to human felicity. Look around us—and of these hundreds, not one of whom but has his own peculiar cares and anxieties, disease or distress of mind, and yet what a universal sentiment of happiness pervades all! A sight like this awakens my spirit to a loftier worship and a more tender gratitude than ten homilies!"

"But," replied Achzib, "the enjoyment of these hundreds consists in exhibiting themselves or their magnificence on so fine an evening. How would the

bright sunset exhilarate the heart of yonder Countess, except it shone on her jewelled attire? It is solely the love of self-display that brings out these gay and happy people."

"Shame on thee!" said the Poet, "thine is a cynical spirit. What is the gaze of the many to that young mother and her boy?"

"I grant they are a pretty sight," said Achzib; "the child is passingly fair, and the mother dotes on him."

"How beautiful," exclaimed the Poet, "is the love which a mother bears to her child! I mean not that yearning, trembling anxiety, with which she regards her grown-up offspring entering upon the cares and temptations of the world; but that hopeful, joyful, unselfish love, which a mother feels for her first-born. She is young; the world has allurements for her, but a stronger impulse is on her heart; she is willing to spend and be spent, to watch and be weary; and the clasping of his little arms round her neck, and the pure out-gushing love of his innocent spirit, are her sufficient reward!"

"It is but the instinct of all animals," said Achzib.

"Yes; but ennobled by a sublimer principle," replied the Poet. "The guardian angel of a child is a gentle Christian mother; she protects not its

outward life only, but informs and purifies, and exalts that nobler existence which elevates man above the brute."

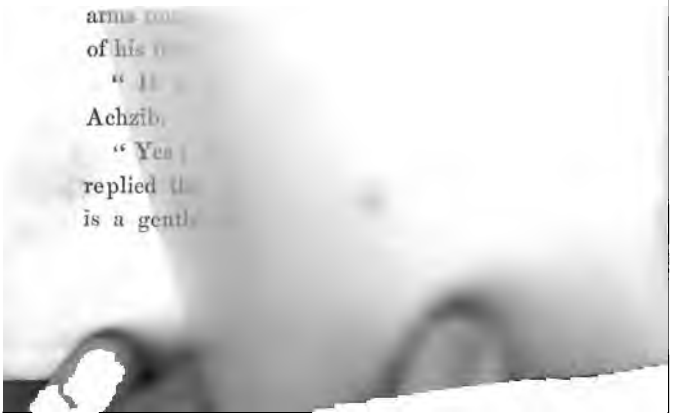
"I wonder," said Achzib, after a moment's pause, "whether an infidel mother ever took as much pains to instruct her child in unbelief as a Christian mother does in belief."

"'T is an unheard-of thing!" said the poet. "A mother could not teach her little child to deny God! 'T is a monstrous thought—an outrage to our nature but to conceive it."

"In what way," inquired Achzib, "would the affection of a mother be made the mode of temptation? for every virtue has its appropriate temptation, and divines teach that the highest virtue consists in the resistance of evil!"

"Thine are strange speculations," said the poet; "but the dearly-beloved child is often a snare to a parent's heart; it has been an idol between the soul and God, and He has sometimes mercifully taken the child to keep the parent from sin."

"I have heard as much," said Achzib, and fell into a long silence.



THE SORROW OF TERE

THE SORROW OF TERESA.

PERSONS.

OLAF.
TERESA, HIS WIFE.
PAOLO, THEIR CHILD.
ACHZIB, AS A NORTHERN HUNTER.
HULDA, AN OLD WOMAN.

SCENE I.

A little chapel in a gloomy northern forest—Teresa on her knees before the image of the Virgin.

Ter. Thou, that didst bear a pain that had no healing—
An undivided misery,
Which unto kindred heart knew no appealing,
O, hear thou me!
I tell thee not mine own peculiar woe;
I tell thee not the want that makes me poor,
For thou, dear Mother of God, all this dost know!—
But I beseech thy blessing, and thy aid;
Assure me, where my nature is afraid,
And where I murmur, strengthen to endure!

[*she bows her head, kneeling in silence—as she prepares to leave the chapel, enter* PAOLO, *with a few snow-drops in his hand.*

Paol. Mother, in Italy I used to gather
Sweet flowers; the fragrant lily, like a cup
Chiselled in marble, and the rich, red rose,
And carry them, an offering to Our Lady;
Think'st thou she will accept such gifts as these,
For they are not like flowers of Italy—
But they are such, dear mother, as grow here?

Ter. My boy, she will accept them! Gracious Virgin,
She would receive a poorer gift than this;
She would accept the will without the gift,
For she doth know the heart! There, on the shrine
Lay them, my boy, and pray if thou have need;
Fear not, for she is gracious,—so is God!

Paol. [*laying the flowers at the feet of the Virgin*]
I have no prayer, dear mother, save for thee,
And that is in my heart. I cannot speak it,
Thou didst weep so, when last I prayed for thee!

Ter. [*kissing him*] It is enough, my boy, the Holy Mother
Knoweth what is within thy inmost heart!

[*she again bows herself before the Virgin, then taking the child's hand, goes out.*

SCENE II.

Night—the same forest; the pine trees are old and splintered, and covered with snow; it is a scene of desolation—at a little distance a small house is seen through an opening of the wood.

Enter ACHZIB, *as a northern hunter.*

Hun. And this is their abode! A mighty change,
From a proud palace on the Arno's side,
To a poor cabin in a northern wild!
Let me retrace the history of this pair:—
He was Count Spazzi—young and rich, and proud,
Ambitious and determined. Fortune brought
Unto his knowledge fair Teresa Cogni,
The daughter of an exiled chief of Corinth;
Beautiful as her own land, and pure
As her own cloudless heavens. It is a tale
So long, so full of sorrow and of guile,
Of heart-ache and remorseless tyranny,
That now I may not stop to trace it out.
But she was forced to marry that stern man,
After her father's death had given her
Into his power.—Enough, it was a marriage
Where joy was not; but where the tyrant smiled
Because his pride and will were gratified.

Next followed lawless years of heedless crime;
To those, the desperate strife between us two,
Wherein I made the vow which I have kept,
How, it now matters not. I watched him fall,
Impelled by my fierce hate, until at length
I saw him banished from his native land.
Meantime that gentle partner of his fall,
Bore, with a patience which was not of earth,
All evils of their cruel destiny.
But she was now a mother—and for him,
That docile boy, whose spirit was like hers,
Ever-enduring and so full of kindness,
What mother would not bear all misery
And yet repine not, blessed in the love
Of that confiding spirit! Thus it was.
And they three went forth, exiles from their land:
One with the curse of his own crimes upon him;
Two innocent as doves, and only cursed
In that their lives and fortunes were bound up
With that bad man's.
He is a hunter now;
And his precarious living earns with toil
And danger, amid natures like his own:
And here I might have left him to live out
The term of his existence, had I not
Seen how the silent virtues of the wife,
And the clear, innocent spirit of the boy,

Have gained ascendance o'er him; and besides,
Sure as I am of Spazzi, 't is for her,
My seventh victim, that I tread these wilds;
For will she not curse God, if from her sight
Is ta'en that precious child, and hate her husband,
By whom it shall appear the deed is done?
She will, she will—I know this mother's heart!
And on the morrow, as a skilful hunter,
I shall present myself before her husband,
No more Count Spazzi, but the hunter Olaf.

[*he goes farther into the forest.*

SCENE III.

The following morning—the interior of the house in the forest—Teresa sitting near the fire—Paolo kneeling upon a footstool at her side.

Paol. And now, dear mother, tell me that old tale,
About the little boy who prayed that Jesus
Might come and play with him.

Ter. I will, my love.

[*she sings in a low recitative.*

* Among green, pleasant meadows,
All in a grove so wild,
Was set a marble image
Of the Virgin and the Child.

* A free translation of one of Herder's beautiful legends.

There oft, on summer evenings,
A lonely boy would rove,
To play beside the image
That sanctified the grove.

Oft sate his mother by him,
Among the shadows dim,
And told how the Lord Jesus
Was once a child, like him.

"And now from highest heaven
He doth look down each day,
And sees whate'er thou doest,
And hears what thou dost say!"

Thus spoke his tender mother:
And on an evening bright,
When the red, round sun descended
'Mid clouds of crimson light,

Again the boy was playing,
And earnestly said he,
"Oh beautiful child Jesus,
Come down and play with me!

"I will find thee flowers the fairest,
And weave for thee a crown;
I will get thee ripe, red strawberries,
If thou wilt but come down!

"Oh Holy, Holy Mother,
Put him down from off thy knee;
For in these silent meadows
There are none to play with me!"

Thus spoke the boy so lonely,
The while his mother heard,
But on his prayer she pondered,
And spoke to him no word.

That self-same night she dreamed
A lovely dream of joy;
She thought she saw young Jesus
There, playing with the boy.

"And for the fruits and flowers
Which thou hast brought to me,
Rich blessing shall be given
A thousand-fold to thee!

"For in the fields of heaven
Thou shalt roam with me at will,
And of bright fruits, celestial,
Shall have, dear child, thy fill!"

Thus tenderly and kindly
The fair child Jesus spo
And full of careful musin
The anxious mother

And thus it was accomplished
In a short month and a day,
That lonely boy, so gentle,
Upon his death-bed lay.

And thus he spoke in dying :
" Oh mother dear, I see
The beautiful child Jesus
A-coming down to me!

" And in his hand he beareth
Bright flowers as white as snow,
And red and juicy strawberries,—
Dear mother, let me go!"

He died—but that fond mother
Her sorrow did restrain,
For she knew he was with Jesus,
And she asked him not again!

Paol. I wish that I had been that boy, dear mother!

Ter. How so, my Paolo, did not that boy die,
And leave his mother childless?

Paol. Ah, alas
I had forgotten that! But, mother dear,
Thou couldst not be so wretched, wanting me,
As I, if thou wert not! It breaks my heart

Only to think of it; and I do pray,
Morning and night, that I may never lose thee!
Ter. My precious child, heaven is so very good,
I do believe it will not sunder us
Who are so dear, so needful to each other!
Paol. Let us not speak of parting! And, indeed,
I will not be a hunter when a man;
I will not leave thee early in a morning,
And keep away from thee for days and days!
I do not love the chase, it frightens me;
The horrid bark of wolves fills me with dread.
I dream of them at night!
Ter. Thou shalt not, love!
And yet, what couldst thou be, if not a hunter,
In these wild regions, Paolo!
Paol. Oh, no, mother,
I will not be a hunter! They are fierce,
They have loud angry voices. Dearest mother,
I tremble when I hear my father speak;
I wish he was as kind, and spoke as sweetly
As thou dost.
Ter. Hush, my Paolo—say not thus—
Thy father is a bold and skilful hunter,—
A very skilful hunter.
Paol. Yes, I know it;
I've often heard it said. But tell me why
Men are so stern! If I am e'er a man

I will be kind and gentle ; and the dogs
Shall not start up whene'er they hear my step,
And skulk away from the warm, pleasant hearth!
I will love all things, mother ; I will make
All things love me!

Ter. My dearest, gentle boy,
I do believe thou wilt!

Paol. Mother, hast heard
My father goes unto the chase to-day,
And that strange hunter with him!

Ter. Nay, my love,
In this wild storm they will not go to hunt.

Paol. I saw them even now. The sledge is ready,
With the horse harnessed to 't ; and, mother dear,
We shall have such a long and quiet day,—
'T will be so happy! And oh, wilt thou tell me
About thy home at Corinth, and the time
When from the morning to the blessed eve
Thou sangest to the music of thy lute ;
Or wander'dst out with kind and merry friends ;
Or tendedst thy sweet flowers ;—and tell me too
About the bright, blue, restless sea at Corinth—
And sing me songs and hymns in thy Greek tongue,
And hear how I can sing them after thee—
Wilt thou, dear mother?

Ter. I will indeed, my love!
But hark! thy birds are chirping for their meal,
Go, feed them, my sweet boy.

Paol. Yes, I will feed them,
And then there will be nothing all the day
To take me from thy side!

[*he goes out.*

Ter. Thou dear, dear child!
Thou happy, innocent spirit! 'T is o'er-payment,
A rich o'er-payment of my many woes,
To see thee gather up such full enjoyment
Within the narrowed limits of the good
Which thy hard fortune gives thee! And no more
Let me account myself forlorn and stripped,
Whilst I have thee, my boy!
But hark! here comes
My husband!

Enter OLAF, *muffled in his hunting dress.*

Olaf. Where's the boy! I hunt to-day.

Ter. Not in this storm, my husband!

Olaf. In this storm!
Where is the boy? I heard him here, just now.

Ter. Why, why the boy? What dost thou want with him?

Olaf. He shall go out with me on this day's hunt

Ter. Oh no! not so—he must not go to-day!

Olaf. Why, 't is a puny, feeble-hearted thing,
Whom thou hast fondled with and fooled, till nought
Of a boy's spirit is within his heart!
But he shall go with me, and learn to dare
The perils of the forest!

Ter. But this once—
This once, my husband, spare him—and when next
Thou goest to the hunt, he shall go with thee!

Olaf. This day he shall go with me! Thou wouldst teach
The boy rebellion! He shall go with me!

Ter. Nay, say not so—he does not love the chase!

Olaf. 'T is me he does not love—and for good reason,—
Thou ever keeps him sitting at thy side,
A caded, dwindled thing that has no spirit!
Look at the other children of the forest;
They are brave, manly boys!

Ter. Alas, my husband,
Thou hast forgotten, 't is a tender flower
Transplanted to a cold, ungenial clime!

Olaf. Say not another word! Thou hear'st my will!

Enter PAOLO; *he runs to his mother's side.*

Ter. Thy father wishes thee to hunt to-day.

Paol. Oh, not to-day, dear mother!

Olaf. And why not?
It ever is thy cry, "Oh not to-day!"
I pr'y thee what new fancy 's in thy head,
That thou canst not go with me?
Paol. I besought
My mother to sing me her Corinth songs;
To tell me of the groves and of the flowers,
And of that happy home that was more fair
Than even was ours, in pleasant Italy;
And she has promised that she will, my father.
Olaf. Ha! ha! is 't so?—'T is even as I thought.
I know wherefore these stories of the past!
Mark me, Teresa, if thou school him thus,
I 'll sunder ye!—Thou need'st not clasp thy hands;
For on my life I 'll do it!
Paol. [*weeping*] Father, father,
Part me not from my mother, and indeed
I will go with you.
Ter. [*aside to Olaf*] Pray thee, speak him kindly!
Olaf. Come, I 'll be thy companion! I will teach thee
To be a man;—dry up these childish tears!
Ter. My sweet boy, do not weep! Go out this day,
Thy mother prays it of thee, and bring back
A little ermine, we will make it tame;
It shall be thine, my Paolo, and shall love thee.

Paol. I will go, dearest mother—nor will cry
Though the gaunt, hungry wolves bark round about,
[*aside*] But, mother dear, will you sit by my side
When we come back, and sing me fast asleep?
I have such horrid dreams of wolves at night.

Ter. I will, indeed I will, my dearest love!

Olaf. Come, come, why all this fondling? We 'll be back
Long ere the night.

Ter. Come, now I 'll put thee on
Thy cloak, and that warm cap of ermine skin
I made for thee last winter! [*they go out.*

Olaf. How she sways him!
With a sweet word she guides him as she will!
Would that the child loved me but half as well;
Heaven help me! but I am a rough, bad man,
And have deserved neither her love nor his!
But now the sledge is ready. [*he goes out.*

SCENE IV.

Near sunset—a dreary, desolate region, surrounded with ice-mountains—the Hunter drives a sledge rapidly forward, in the back part of which sit Olaf and Paolo.

Olaf. Where is this wild? I know not where thou drivest!

Hunter. Below our feet lies the eternal ice
Of the great sea!
Olaf. Our prey abides not here!
Hunt. We 'll find enough, anon!
Olaf. Thou dost not know
The track on which thou go'st.—Here only dwells
The gaunt and savage wolf! and hark—even now
I hear their bark!
Paol. Oh, are there wolves a-nigh?
Hunt. Ay, they are nigh, look in that black abysm,
It is a wild wolf's den!
Olaf. Thou braggart hunter,
Is this thy wondrous skill? Wheel round the sledge
Before the horse is maddened with the cry!
There is no time to lose! Pull in the beast!
Hunt. It will not do—the wolves are now upon us!
Paol. Oh father, save me!—save me, dearest father!
Olaf. Let go my cloak—they shall not hurt thee, child!
[*to the Hunter*] Thou cursed man!—Dost see these savage beasts,
And yet sit grinning there, as thou had'st done
A piece of hunter-craft!
Hunt. You carry arms—
Cannot you fire upon them? They will gorge
Upon each other, and be pacified!

Olaf. If they taste blood, they will be more ferocious—
And thou know'st well we have not amunition
For such a strife! yet will I fire on them,
Their savage barking will bring others down.
[*he fires.*

Paol. Oh horrid! how they tear each other's flesh.

Olaf. Now hurry forward, for our only hope
Lies in out speeding them!

Paol. Let us go home!

Olaf. Again they are upon us—their gaunt jaws
Dropping with blood, which they lick evermore!
Now for another slaughter!

Hunt. 'T is in vain,
For right and left, yet other packs are coming!

Paol. Oh father, father, they will be upon us!
And I shall never see my mother more!

Hunt. Peace, brawling child!

Olaf. My poor dear boy, be still!

Paol. I will, I will, dear father!

Olaf. [*to the Hunter*] Cursed murderer,
His blood will be upon thy head!

Hunt. Indeed!
Who forced him from his mother 'gainst his will?

Olaf. Most strange, inhuman wretch!

Hunt. Nay, use thy gun,
'T will do thee better service than thy tongue!

Olaf. [*aside*] Please heaven I live, I 'll pay thee
for this hunt,
Wages thou didst not ask!
[*he puts his last charge into his piece.*
This is the last—
When this is done, there is no other hope
But in our flight! [*he fires.*
Now heaven must be our helper!
On, on, spare not the thong!
[*the horse in dashing forward, breaks from the sledge; the wolves fall upon him instantly.*
Olaf. Now must we fly!
Hunt. There is a hut among these icy deserts,
Raised by some hunters. While they gorge themselves,
We may escape.
Paol. Take, take my hand, dear father!
Olaf. How cold it is, poor boy!
[*they turn among the ice-mountains, and soon are out of sight.*

SCENE V.

A chaotic wilderness of icebergs.

Enter the HUNTER, *and* OLAF *carrying* PAOLO, *who appears faint.*

Hunt. I hear their bark—we are not much a-head!

Olaf. How far is 't now unto the hunter's cabin?

Hunt. A half hour it would take us, could we run
At our best speed—but cumbered with the child,
What can we do?

Paol. Dear father, I will run—
I will not cumber thee—I am strong now!

Olaf. My poor dear boy, thou canst not! would to heaven
Thou wert at home!

Paol. How kind thou art, dear father!
I will run on—I will not cumber thee!

Hunt. The wolves are here! Hark, hark! their barking comes
Upon the passing wind!

Paol. Oh, they are here!

Olaf. How can we 'scape from them? I'll sell my life
Dearly for this child's sake!

Hunt. Throw them the child!
And while they gorge on him, we can escape.

Olaf. Thou devil of hell!

Paol. Sweet father, do it not!

[*the wolves surround them; and the Hunter snatching up Paolo throws him among them.*

Paol. Oh father, father, save me!

Olaf. My boy! my boy!

Hunt. It is too late—they tear him limb from limb!

Now for escape! Run, run, and we shall reach
A place of safety! [*he darts forward.*

Olaf. God in heaven! my boy—
My gentle-hearted boy! my murdered boy!

[*he dashes among the wolves with his hunting knife, and then springs forward after the Hunter.*

SCENE VI.

Night—the interior of Olaf's house—Teresa alone—a bright fires burns on the hearth—refreshments are set out, and clothes hanging by the fire for Olaf and Paolo.

Teresa. How late it is! an hour beyond the midnight!
And bitter cold it is! The icy wind
Even pierces through these walls! Poor little Paolo,

How weary and half-frozen he will be;
But he shall sit upon the bench beside me,
And I will hold his hands, and lay his head
Upon my knee; it is his dear indulgence—
Poor child, and he shall have it all to-night!
[*she puts fresh logs on the fire.*
And this is the third time I have renewed
The wasting fire! and when I piled it first,
"My Paolo will be here," I said, "before
These logs shall have burned through!" but, now alas,
I know not what to say, saving the wonder
That he comes not, and even this is grown
A kind of vague despair, that seems to threaten
He will not come at all! Oh, if aught happed,
Save good unto the child, like poor old Jacob,
Then should I be bereaved!

Enter HULDA, *with a very dejected countenance; she takes down Paolo's clothes, and folds them up.*

Ter. Nay, how is this?
Huld. He will not need them more!
Ter. Woman, what say'st thou?
Huld. Two hunters from the Icebergs are come down—
Ere long thy husband comes.
Ter. And not my boy?

Hulda. [*laying the clothes together*] He will not need these more!

Ter. Then he is dead!

Huld. Alas, dear lady, yes!

Ter. Peace, woman! peace!
The earth were less forlorn without the sun,
Than I without my boy! He is not dead!

Huld. Would God he were not!

Ter. Do not say he is!
It is like blasphemy to say he 's dead.
Heaven would not strip me so—O do not say it!
Where are these men? I 'll forth, and meet my boy!

Huld. [*stopping her*] He is not on the road! No, never more
Will he repass this threshold!

Ter. 'T is a dream!

Huld. Dear lady, no!—too plainly tell the hunters
All that has happed!

Ter. And pr'ythee, what has happed?

Huld. A quarrel 'twixt the hunter and our master,
Who now comes wounded home.

Ter. And what of Paolo?

Huld. O heavy, heavy news!—The child is missing!

Ter. Nay, then he is not dead!—Oh no, not dead!
I told thee Heaven would not so deal with me!
My precious boy will come back on the morrow,—

Hunters are often lost for many days.
These men shall seek for him among the wilds—
I too, will go myself. Where are the men?

Enter the HUNTER, *hastily.*

Hunt. Dear lady, woe is me!
Huld. Away, away!
Ter. Where is my boy?
Hunt. Oh wretched, wretched mother!
Ter. Torture me not, but tell me where he is?
Hunt. Lady, forgive me for the news I bring!
Ter. Then is he dead?
Hunt. Most terrible recital!
Lady, thy husband to preserve himself,
Hath given thy little Paolo to the wolves!
Ter. [*with a scream of horror*] Oh no, no, no!
Hunt. He stopped their maws
With thy poor Paolo's blood!
Ter. He did not so!
Hunt. Poor little one, how he did cry for thee!
Huld. Peace! can'st not hold thy peace. Oh hear it not!
Lady, he is but missing!
Hunt. Poor, weak thing.
How he did cling to me, and pray that I
Would save him from his father!

[*Teresa clasps her hands, and stands in speechless agony.*

I might have snatched a pretty lock of hair;
I wish I had—a pretty, curling lock!

Ter. [*falling on her knees*] God, of thy mercy
strengthen, strengthen me!
Enable me to bear what is thy will!

[*she falls insensible to the floor.*

Huld. Wretch, why didst tell it her so cruelly—
Besides, the Iceberg hunters say not so.
Thou 'st killed her by thy tidings!

Hunt. Hark, he comes!
I hear her husband's voice!

Huld. She must not see him!

[*she bears Teresa out.*

Hunt. I must off! I 'll not again meet Olaf;
He 's not the facile fool that once he was:
But there 's that damning deed laid to his charge,
Will make Teresa curse both him and Heaven!

[*he goes out.*

SCENE VII.

The following day—the interior of the chapel—Teresa on her knees before the image of the Virgin.

Mother of God, who borest
That cruel pang which made thy spirit bleed!
Who knew'st severest anguish, sorrow sorest,
Hear me in my great need!

My need is great, my woe is like thine own!
I am bereaved of mine only one!
Thou know'st I have no other!
Comfort me, oh my mother!

Kind Saviour, who didst shed
Tears for thy Lazarus dead;
Who raised the widow's son from off his bier;
Who didst endure all woe
That human hearts can know,
Hear me, O hear!

Thou that are strong to comfort, look on me—
I sit in darkness, and behold no light!
Over my heart the waves of agony
Have gone, and left me faint! Forbear to smite
A bruised and broken reed! Sustain, sustain;
Divinest Comforter, to thee I fly,
Let me not fly in vain!
Support me with thy love, or else I die!

Father, who didst send down thy Well-Beloved,
To suffer shame and death that I might live,
Hear me, in this great sorrow, not unmoved,
And if I sin, forgive!
Whate'er I had was thine!
A God of mercy thou hast ever been;
Assist me to resign;
And if I murmur, count it not for sin!

How rich I was, I dare not—dare not think;
How poor I am, thou knowest, who canst see
Into my soul's unfathomed misery;
Forgive me if I shrink!
Forgive me that I shed these human tears!
That it so hard appears
To yield my will to thine, forgive, forgive!
Father, it is a bitter cup to drink!

[*she bows her face, and after a time of silence, rises.*

My soul is strengthened! It shall bear
My lot, whatever it may be;
And from the depths of my despair
I will look up, and trust in Thee!

[*she goes slowly o*

SCENE VIII.

Many weeks afterwards—a chamber of Olaf's hou
—Olaf near death, lying upon his bed—Teresa sit
beside him.

Olaf. For years of tyranny I do beseech
Thy pardon!—For thy meekness and thy truth,
The unrepining patience, and the beauty
Of thy most holy life, my wife, I bless thee!

Ter. Thank God! affliction has been merciful!
My boy, thy death has saved thy father's soul!

Olaf. And the great might of virtue in thyself;—
Thy resignation, and thy pitying pardon—
For these, receive my blessing ere I die—
These, which have been the means of my salvation!

Ter. Bless Him, my husband, who is strong to save!

Olaf. I do, I do!—and I rejoice in death;
Though, had my life been spared, I would have been
Both son and husband to thee!—Weep not thou—
We shall all three ere long be reunited—
I, the poor outcast else, be one with you!

Ter. Out of affliction has arisen joy,
And out of black despair immortal hope!

Olaf. [*after a silence of some time*] Give me thy hand, sweet friend;—I fain would sleep;—
And if I wake no more, I still would know
Thou wilt be with me when I pass away!

Ter. May the kind, holy Mother bless thy sleep,—
And bless thy waking, be 't of life or death!

[*Olaf remains perfectly quiet, and after some time a light slumber comes over Teresa, during which she heurs dream-like voices singing.*

Oh human soul, 't is done,
Past is thy trial; past thy woe and pain;
Nor is there mortal stain
Upon thy spirit-robes, redeemed one!
Spirit, that through a troubled sea
Of sin and passion hast been wildly tost,
And yet not lost,
With songs of triumph do we welcome thee!

Redeemed spirit, come,
Thine is a heavenly home!
Come, freed from human error;
From frailty, that did gird thee as the sea
Engirds the earth; from darkness, doubt and terror,
Which hung around thy soul ere the light came!
From these we welcome thee!
Hark, heaven itself, rejoices,
Hark, the celestial voices
Shouting, like trumpet-peals, thy spirit-name!—
Oh gladly enter in,
Thou conqueror of sin,
The eternal city of the holy ones,
Where, brighter far than stars, or moons, or suns,
Thou shalt shine out before the Infinite!—
And see! a heavenly child,
With garments undefiled,
Streaming upon the air like odorous light,
Awaits to welcome thee!

Oh father, clasp thy boy,
Pour out thy soul in joy,
In love, which human frailty held in thrall;—
Boy, clasp thy father now,
Distrust and fear in heaven there cannot be,
For love enfoldeth all!
Oh happy pair, too long divided,
Pour out your souls in one strong sympathy!
Eternal Love your meeting steps hath guided,
Ne'er to be parted through eternity!

Ter. [*waking*] I know that he is dead; but this sweet omen,
These holy voices pealing joy in heaven,
Have taken the sting from death! My dear, dear husband,
I know that thou art blessed—art reunited
Unto our boy!

[*She bends over the body for a few moments; then kneeling down and covering her face, she remains in silent prayer.*

Achzib's mission was ended; and he returned to his fellows with exultation. "I have done that which I set out to do!" he exclaimed, "and ye shall declare me victor. I have proved the supremacy of evil; for of the seven whom I have tried, I have won four. Let me no longer be called Achzib the Liar, for I have proved that evil obtains a wider and more powerful agency than good. I have won four young men, in the strength of manhood, and in the full force of intellect: I have lost only a poor scholar, an old man, and a woman!"

"Methinks," said the younger spirit, "thou hast been in some measure defeated; inasmuch as these feeble ones were mightier than thou!"

"I was a fool," returned Achzib, "to attempt any of the three: in them passion, and the aptitude to sin, were weak: one was enfeebled by sickness, one by old age, the third by long endurance of evil."

"Thy triumph had been greater," interrupted the elder, "had thou won any of the three, whom, losing, thou pretendest to undervalue; the four thou hast won were an easy conquest, for though boastful of virtue, they were weak in principle."

" It matters not," said Achzib : " any of these, but for my ministration, might have gone on through life without materially adding to crime ; without drawing others after them into sin ; and without baptising human hearts in woe, as they have done ; and I tell ye, of the seven whom I have tried, four have become my victims."

" We deny it not," said the two.

" Then let me reign as a crowned one," exclaimed Achzib, " for I have proved that evil is mightier than good!"

As Achzib thus spoke, an angel of truth stood before them. " Achzib," said he, " thou hast tried the sons of men, and hast tempted four to perdition ; thus has the All-wise permitted. I come not however, to speak of their doom, but of good and evil as it regards human life. Thou hast introduced sin and sorrow among men ; but thou hast only feebly known the result of every downward step in human degradation and woe. Thou hast seen evil obtaining the mastery over good ; sin laying desolate the home of virtue and peace ; the good and the kind brought to the grave, or going through life mourning because of it ; and thou hast exclaimed, 'surely, I am mightier than God!' Thou hast rivetted on the chains of oppression ; thou hast darkened the minds of the noble and pure, with thy lying deeds ; and

hast left generations yet unborn, to groan under thy sinful agency; and men beholding these things, have exclaimed, with bleeding hearts, 'surely evil is mightier than good!' But a superior intelligence looks beyond the outward seeming, and perceives in the midst of evil, only more widely extended good.

"O fools and blind, you cannot degrade God! Your malign interference cannot reverse the decrees of his omnipotent wisdom. His goodness upholds and pervades all things, both of the outward creation, and man's moral existence; and though evil is permitted, it neither mars nor deranges the great plan of universal Providence. Evil, like darkness, which makes visible the glory and immensity of God's works, unseen by day, though still present; brings forth, in the moral world, the loveliness, the nobility, and the joy-diffusing nature of virtue. It is the depth of shadow, by which good is thrown into strong relief; it is the source whence many of the highest actions, many of the most triumphant passages of a conflicting life; whence often, the most melting and beautiful trophies of the soul, winged in all its strength and affection, have been made to proceed. It is the trial of love, of faith, of patience; it calls for forgiveness, and christian charity; it teaches forbearance, meekness, and pity. It is the subjection to evil which is the ordeal of the human spirit, and it is the severe con-

trast of crime, which leads it to pay its devoutest homage to virtue.

"Designer of evil, thou hast failed! For every soul whom thou hast lured into sin, thou hast thrown others, through the anguish, or by the example of that sin, upon the healing mercy of Him who is able and willing to save!"

Achzib turned abashed from the speaker of Truth, and retired with his fellows into darkness; and the angel lifting up his voice, poured out a hymn of praise.

Thou, that createdst with a word each star;
Who, out of nothingness, brought systems forth,
Yet didst exalt beyond creation, far,
The human soul, immortal at its birth;—
Thou gavest light and darkness; life and death;
Thou gavest good and ill,
Twin powers, to be
Companions of its mortal, devious path;
Yet left the human will,
Unlimited and free!
We know how pain and woe,
Sorrow and sin, make up the sum of life!
How good and evil are at ceaseless strife,
And how the soul doth err in choice, we know!

Yet not for this droop we, nor are afraid;
We know thy goodness, we behold thy might;
We know thy truth can never be gainsaid,
And what thou dost is right!
We glorify thy name that thus it is;—
We glorify thy name for more than this!
We know that out of darkness shines thy light;
That out of evil cometh forth thy good;
That none shall circumvent the Infinite,
Nor can Omnipotence be e'er subdued!
We know that doubt shall cease, and feeble terror;
That thou wilt wipe all tears from every eye!
That thine Almighty Truth shall vanquish error,
And death shall die!
We know that this shall be,
Therefore we trust in Thee,
And pour in balm to human hearts that bleed;
And bind the broken and the bruised reed;
And say, rejoice, rejoice!
For truth is strong!
Exalt ye every voice
In one triumphant song—
For Truth is God—and he shall make you free!
Evil is but of Time;—Good of Eternity!

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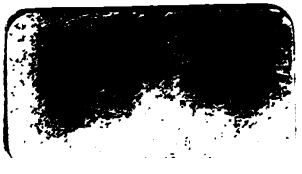

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